

CAJ4N  
NPC  
-1988  
055


# ONTARIO'S NIAGARA PARKS PLANNING THE SECOND CENTURY

• *A 100-Year Vision, A 20-Year Plan and A Five-Year Action Plan*

Prepared for The Niagara Parks Commission



CH2ON  
NPC  
- 1988  
Ø55



Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2022 with funding from  
University of Toronto

<https://archive.org/details/31761115478679>





ONTARIO'S NIAGARA PARKS

PLANNING THE SECOND CENTURY

• *A 100-Year Vision, A 20-Year Plan and A Five-Year Action Plan*

---

Prepared for The Niagara Parks Commission

By Moriyama & Teshima Planners Limited

Toronto, Canada

October 1988

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### SUMMARY 6

### ONTARIO'S NIAGARA PARKS 12

The Site 12

The Niagara Parks Commission's First 100 Years 12

### FOREWORD by Pamela Verrill Walker, Chairman, The Niagara Parks Commission 14

### ASSIGNMENT 16

Study Goals 16

Study Objectives 17

Response to the Assignment 17

### INTRODUCTION by Raymond Moriyama, Principal, Moriyama & Teshima Planners Limited 19

### APPROACH 22

Working Sessions 22

Think-Tank Session 22

Public Meetings 22

Presentation to Government Officials 22

Work Process 23





## CONTEXT

### THE NATURAL HISTORY OF THE REGION 25

- The Origin of the Rock 25
- Glaciers Re-shape the Land 26

### THE HUMAN HISTORY OF THE REGION 28

#### THE NIAGARA SITES 34

- A. Old Fort Erie 34
- B. Town of Fort Erie Riverfront 35
- C. Landscape of the South Boulevard 36
- D. Frenchman's Creek 36
- E. Miller's Creek 37
- F. Navy Island 37
- G. Chippawa 38
- H. The Dufferin Islands 39
- I. Falls Rapids 40
- J. "The Hollow" at Queen Victoria Park 40
- K. Queen Victoria Park 41
- L. Oakes Garden Theatre 42
- M. The Whirlpool Rapids 42
- N. The Whirlpool 43
- O. Niagara Glen 43
- P. Whirlpool Golf Course 44
- Q. The School of Horticulture 44
- R. Queenston Heights Park 45
- S. Queenston 46
- T. The North Boulevard of The Niagara Parkway 47
- U. Brown's Point Park 47
- V. McFarland Point Park 48

- W. Fort George 48
- X. Non-Contiguous Sites 49
  - Battlefield House 49
  - Charles Daley Park 49
  - Drummond Hill Cemetery and Lundy's Lane Battlefield 49
  - Butler's Burying Ground 49

### TOURISM 51

- The Market Segments 51
  - Baby Boomers 51
  - The New Singles 51
  - Working Women 51
  - Two-Career Families 51
  - Travelling Families 51
  - Seniors 51
  - Widows and Widowers 52
  - Americans 52
  - Other Foreign Visitors 52
  - Convention Delegates 52
  - Local Residents 52
- Economic Benefits from The Niagara Parks Commission 53
- Economic Benefits to the Region, the Province and Canada 53

### TRANSPORTATION 53

- Queen Victoria Park and Environs 54
  - Traffic Problems 54
- Pedestrian Movements 54
- People Mover 55
- Tour Buses 55
- Parking 55
- Regional Accessibility 55
- Niagara-on-the-Lake and Fort Erie 55

## THE PLAN

### THE 100-YEAR VISION 57

- A New Synthesis for the 21st Century 57
- An Attitude 58
- An Innovative Role 58

### A NEW SYNTHESIS OF LANDSCAPES 61

- Urban and Pedestrian Linkages 62
- Green Linkages 62
- The Welland River Parkway Linkage 63
- A Canal as a New Tourism Infrastructure 63
- The Gateway to Ontario and Canada 64
- Regional Transportation System to Serve the Visitor 66
  - Roads 66
  - City Roads and Parking 66
  - Regional Rail System 67
  - Integrated People Mover System 68
  - Regional Water Transportation 69

### THE 20-YEAR PLAN FOR ONTARIO'S NIAGARA PARKS 70

- Tourism 70
  - Extending the Length of Visitor Stay 70
  - Extending the Visitor Season 70
  - Developing Attractions for Visitor Expectations and Needs 70
  - Developing Themes 70
  - Broadening Attractions Increases the Length of Stay 71
  - Renewing Themes for Long-Term Success 71
- Planning Strategies 72
  - Dispersion 72
  - Nodes 73
  - Linkages 74
  - Gateways 75

### THE PLAN FOR ONTARIO'S NIAGARA PARKS 77

- Queen Victoria Park 77
- Falls / Table Rock 78
- The Toronto Generating Plant 80
- The Greenhouse-Galleria 82
- The Forum 84
- The Dufferin Islands 85
- The Gateway to Ontario and Canada 86
- Queen Victoria Park Gardens 88
- Whirlpool Rapids / Whirlpool /
  - Niagara Glen / Queenston Heights Park Node 91
- Whirlpool Rapids 92
- The Whirlpool 93
- Niagara Glen 95
- Whirlpool Golf Course 96
- School of Horticulture 96
- Floral Clock 98
- Queenston Heights Park 98
- Village of Queenston 99
- The North Boulevard of the Niagara Parkway 102
- Niagara Parks Gateway North 103
- The South Boulevard of the Niagara Parkway 106
- Landscaping 106
- King's Bridge Park 106
- Navy Island 107
- Ussher's, Boyer's, Black, Baker's, Miller's and Frenchman's Creeks 107
- Gonder's Flats 107
- Miller's Creek Campground and Marina 108
- Frenchman's Creek 109
- Town of Fort Erie Riverfront 109
- Niagara Parks Gateway South 110
- Old Fort Erie 111

**TRANSPORTATION 112**

Queen Victoria Park	112
Road Plan	112
Parking Plan	113
Pedestrian Ways	114
The Niagara Parks Commission People Mover	114
Whirlpool Rapids / Niagara Glen / Queenston Heights Park Node	115
The Niagara Parks Gateway North	115
The Niagara Parks Gateway South	116
The North and South Boulevards of the Niagara Parkway	116

**THE FIVE-YEAR ACTION PLAN 119**

I. Independent Actions Undertaken by the Commission	119
A. Organize the Commission Staff	120
B. Improve the Visitor Experience	120
C. Develop and Enhance Physical Facilities	120
D. Program Activities	121
E. Develop Marketing	122
F. Undertake Detailed Planning	123
G. Improve the Transportation System	123
H. Develop a Five-Year Financial Plan	123
II. Interdependent Cooperative Actions	124
A. Integrating Planning	124
B. Integrating Transportation	125
C. Integrating Programming	125
D. Integrating Marketing	126
The Gateway to Ontario and Canada	127
Attitude for the Five-Year Action Plan	128
Common Goals, Complementary Actions for the Five-Year Action Plan	128
Model for Cooperation	129

**PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM 131**

Priorities	131
Niagara Parks Commission Priorities for the First Decade	132
General	132
Queen Victoria Park	132
The Whirlpool Rapids, Whirlpool and Niagara Glen	132
The Whirlpool Golf Course and School of Horticulture	133
Queenston Heights Park	134
The North Boulevard of the Niagara Parkway	134

The South Boulevard of the Niagara Parkway	134
Town of Fort Erie	135

Old Fort Erie	135
Interdependent Priorities for the First Decade	135

General	135
Queen Victoria Park	136
Queenston Heights Park	136
The North Boulevard of the Niagara Parkway	136
Fort George	137
The South Boulevard of the Niagara Parkway	137
Town of Fort Erie	137

Niagara Parks Commission Priorities for the Second Decade	137
---	-----

General	137
Queen Victoria Park	137
The Whirlpool Rapids, Whirlpool, and Niagara Glen	138
The Whirlpool Golf Course and School of Horticulture	138
Queenston Heights Park	138
The North Boulevard of the Niagara Parkway	138
The South Boulevard of the Niagara Parkway	139
Old Fort Erie	139

Interdependent Priorities for the Second Decade	139
---	-----

General	139
Queen Victoria Park	139
Queenston Heights Park	139
Town of Fort Erie	139

**RECOMMENDATIONS 141****ACKNOWLEDGMENTS 146****SPECIAL THANKS 150****THE STUDY TEAM 151****PHOTOGRAPHY CREDITS 152**

This vision for the Second Century of Ontario's Niagara Parks builds on The Niagara Parks Commission's first 100 years of accomplishments. It continues the tradition of balancing preservation and development with income and expenditure. With continuing foresight and care, the Commission will enter a new era of competitive international tourism while preserving the irreplaceable natural heritage of the Parks.

The Commission has recognized the need for on-going enhancement of the visitor experience from Lake Erie to Lake Ontario; for lengthening visitor stay; for increasing visitation in winter and extending it into early spring and late fall; for decentralizing visitor load especially in summer; and for meeting the needs of older travellers, the handicapped, families, youths and children, the well-educated, the prosperous and the increasing number of international tourists who have the choice of attractions world-wide and are demanding higher quality goods, accommodation and services.

### Background

The overall planning was determined by the context of the 600 million years of natural and 12,000 years of human history of Niagara region (described beginning on page 25). The Commission recognizes that many sites in Ontario's Niagara Parks have strong potential for more active use, interpretation and visitor enjoyment. The sites are reviewed individually beginning on page 34.

### Tourism Perspective

The Niagara Parks Commission is the most important component of tourism in the Region. Ontario's Niagara Parks and the City attract 11 million visitors each year, but Niagara does not receive economic benefits commensurate with this volume of tourists. Most visitors stop just long enough to see the Falls, then drive off to more varied destinations – taking the benefits of their patronage with them.

Today's travellers consist of a variety of overlapping segments, each looking for something different: Baby Boomers; The New Singles; Working Women; Two-Career Families; Travelling Families; Seniors; Widows and Widowers; Americans (the single largest group of current visitors to Niagara, accounting for 44% of all visits); other Foreign Visitors; Convention Delegates; and Local Residents (page 51).

All these groups already come to Niagara. That they don't stay long suggests that they're not finding what they are looking for. In particular:

- There are not enough quality things to do and see;
- Existing facilities do not meet contemporary tourism standards;
- Visitors receive little or no orientation about attractions and events in the region; and
- Traffic and parking are so inconvenient that many people decide it's just not worth the bother.

With the intense competition generated by other tourist destinations world-wide, the needs of individual visitor groups must be precisely met. No organization is better suited to take a leadership role in creating the new Niagara than The Parks Commission itself.

### **Economic Benefits for All Stakeholders**

Given that economic benefits will extend well beyond the Parks, and will allow the private sector, the Regional Municipality of Niagara, City of Niagara Falls, Towns of Niagara-on-the-Lake and Fort Erie, Ontario and Canada to achieve significant gains, the responsibility for developing Park resources should not rest solely with the Commission (page 53).

### **The 100-Year Vision**

The 100-Year Vision for Ontario's Niagara Parks begins on page 57. Underlying this long-range vision is a *new synthesis for the 21st Century* that strikes a balance between the technological, the cultural and – especially – the natural components of the Parks from Lake to Lake and extending into the region. The foundation for the 100-Year Vision can be thought of as an *attitude*, a broadly shared common goal for achieving a new symbiosis of human culture and natural processes based on:

- *Health:* Maintaining the integrity of the natural system;
- *Fit:* Making whole the union of human beings, nature and technology; and
- *Cooperation:* Which is the means to achieve the common goals of health and fit.

In this new synthesis, The Niagara Parks Commission has an innovative and catalytic role.

When seen in the larger context of the visitor's experience, several existing landscapes suggest new uses, transcending the current limitations of jurisdictions that separate potentially related activities. When synthesized together, these generate complementary opportunities for Ontario's Niagara Parks, the Municipalities and the Region

for enhancing the urban, rural and tourism landscapes. The 100-Year Vision creates green urban linkages, strengthens the relationships between the City and Queen Victoria Park, and develops a canal, a visitor Gateway and a unified transportation system (page 61).

### **The 20-Year Plan**

The 20-Year Plan for Ontario's Niagara Parks begins on page 70. It is based on bringing forward themes unique to Niagara, including nature and scenic activities; educational, cultural and historical activities; adventure and exploration; and entertainment programs, all supported by quality ancillary services and facilities. Clustering of separate but linked attractions and support facilities will progressively spread visitors and the benefits they bring from Lake to Lake.

So that Niagara will form one continuous attraction for visitors, much attention has been given to developing the linkages between the sites (page 74).

Gateways to receive visitors should be established at Fort Erie, Niagara Falls and Niagara-on-the-Lake, the major points-of-entry into the Parks system. Not only will these provide comprehensive information for visitors, they will also be centres of attraction in their own right.

The Plans for the next 20 years begin with Queen Victoria Park, the area of highest visitor interest (page 77). New attractions will relieve visitor pressure next to the Falls and extend activity along the Niagara Gorge through the Whirlpool, Niagara Glen and Queenston Heights. Major components of the Plan include terraces to increase the viewing sites and redeveloping the visitor facilities at Table Rock.

Queen Victoria Park should be progressively transformed into a pedestrian domain. Outdoor pedestrian spaces will be developed to a standard in keeping with both the significance of and public expectations for a world-class attraction. Provision has been made for convenient tourist movement integrated with private tourism developments.

A series of new attractions, including a Hydro Museum and Information Centre, a Greenhouse-Galleria and a Forum should be created to extend visitor interest and activity from the Falls to the Dufferin Islands along a broad Pedestrian Promenade overlooking the upper rapids.

The Niagara Parks Commission should become a pro-active catalyst in developing the Murray Hill site overlooking the Falls. There, with the participation of Ontario Hydro, the Governments of Canada and Ontario, the Regional Municipality of Niagara, the City of Niagara Falls and the Canadian business community, the Commission should create a Gateway to Ontario and Canada. This Gateway would be a visitors' centre and an attraction with the critical mass, broad appeal, distinctive images and contents necessary to gain support of tourists and residents alike. It would extend from the private tourism district of the City, across Murray Hill, into Queen Victoria Park, the Gorge, and the River.

## **Five-Year Action Plan**

Starting immediately with the Five-Year Action Plan (page 119), The Niagara Parks Commission should upgrade and expand its facilities. As long as local tourism operators follow through with the same kind of segmented marketing recommended for the Commission, they too will benefit.

The number-one priority of the Five-Year Action Plan is to develop the Gateway for Ontario and Canada, which will be the key strategic attraction in Niagara Falls. A joint venture of the Commission and Ontario Hydro, it will be located on the lands of the Commission and Murray Hill. The Governments of Ontario and Canada, the Regional Municipality of Niagara, the City of Niagara Falls and the Canadian business community should also participate.

The Five-Year Action Plan has two separate thrusts:

**1. Independent actions** to be undertaken by the Commission on its own lands to refine the details of the 20-Year Plan, improve transportation and marketing, and develop the Commission lands within the self-funding mandate for projects that do not require interaction with others. This will require organizing the Commission staff; improving the visitor experience in Queen Victoria Park; developing facilities that will attract new visitors to Queen Victoria Park; programming activities; developing marketing strategies; undertaking detailed planning; improving the transportation system; and developing a five-year financial plan.

**2. Interdependent cooperative actions** to be undertaken by the Commission and others for jointly developing the Gateway to Ontario and Canada and other attractions and integrating transportation, marketing programs and planning.

## Planning and Implementation Program

Starting at the same time as the Five-Year Action Plan are the priorities of the 20-Year Plan. The priorities for the first ten years accomplish the crucial initial steps of setting up the process and organization; increasing attractions, stay and revenues; and developing the Gateway to Ontario and Canada (page 132). The priorities for the second ten years are development-oriented and capital-intensive, designed to create visitor facilities and attractions from Lake to Lake (page 137).

## Recommendations

A complete list of recommendations begins on page 141. Some of the major ones are:

- That the broad concept of *Health, Fit and Cooperation* be adopted as the basis for all further activities.
- That the Commission
  - Adopt a pro-active role,
  - Improve the visitor experience,
  - Encourage discovery and education;
  - Enhance the natural and Park landscapes;
  - Enhance opportunities for tourism and economic development;
  - Create benefits for the Municipalities, the Region, the Province and Canada; and
  - Enhance international relations.
- That the following supporting planning strategies be adopted:
  - *Dispersion*, to spread the increasing numbers of tourists throughout the Primary Tourism Area from Chippawa to Queenston and along the Parkway;

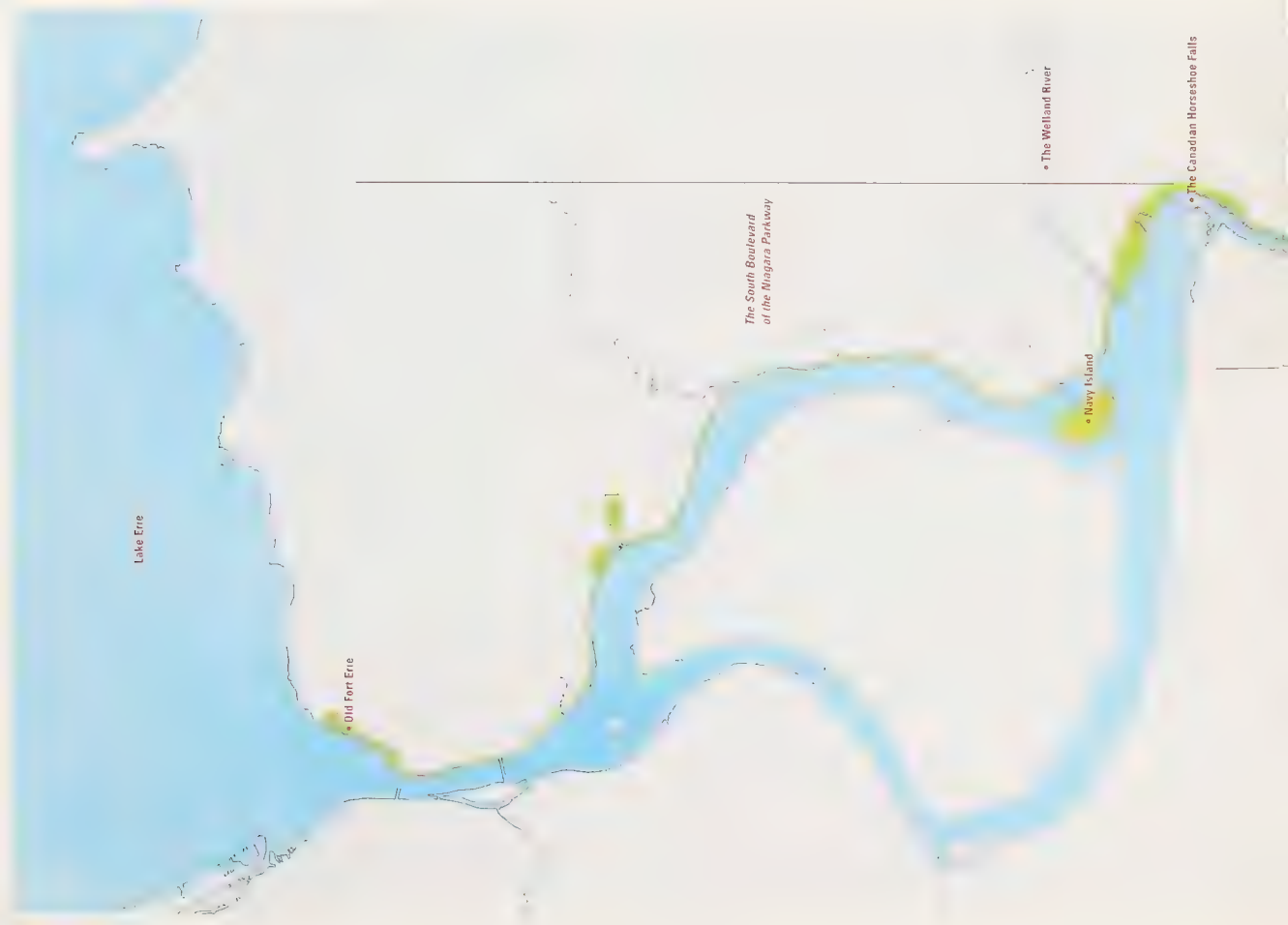
- *Nodes*, to develop centres of activity and attraction along the Parkway;
- *Linkages*, to create a network of activity and tourism connections between centres of visitor interest along the Parkway and in the Region; and
- *Gateways*, to receive visitors, provide tourist information and become centres of attraction in their own right.

This plan also includes recommendations for interim enhancements (page 141); acquisition priorities (page 141); research priorities (page 142); planning activities (page 142); programming and interpretation activities; architectural principles (page 143); landscape architectural activities (143); marketing priorities (page 144); visitor transportation (page 144); and phased development of new attractions (page 145).

Ontario's Niagara Parks are the flagship of tourism for the Province and Canada. The careful stewardship of The Niagara Parks Commission, aided by the vision outlined in this report, will see Ontario's Niagara Parks grow in international importance and quality over the next century.



0 1000 2000 3000m







Ontario's Niagara Parks stretch as a continuous ribbon of green along the west bank of the Niagara River for 56 kilometres from Lake Erie in the south to Lake Ontario in the north.

### The Site

To the casual visitor, the word “Niagara” conjures up images of the mighty Falls in Queen Victoria Park. But Ontario’s Niagara Parks encompass much more than just the famous cataract. They stretch along the west bank of the Niagara River for 56 kilometres from Lake Erie in the south to Lake Ontario in the north, encompassing a broad spectrum of experiences – some rich with echoes of our Canadian heritage, others touching us with the beauty of nature.

Perhaps nowhere is this more evident than along the South Boulevard of the Niagara Parkway, which runs parallel to the winding riverbanks from that living page of Canadian history, Old Fort Erie, to the thundering Falls themselves.

The South Boulevard is just one of three distinct landscapes created by the Niagara River. It is a relic of the last Ice Age, formed as the River meandered through the heavy soils deposited at the bottoms of glacial lakes. Within this low-relief terrain, rivers and creeks snake through young woodlands. The South Boulevard is highlighted by a succession of tree-lined watercourses, strung like jewels on a necklace.

The second landscape, the Niagara Gorge, was carved out of ancient rock by 12,000 years of water rushing over the Falls. This magnificent valley stretches from the Niagara Escarpment, through a deep canyon to Niagara Glen, past the Whirlpool and the Whirlpool Rapids, and on to the Falls.

The third landscape, the North Boulevard of the Niagara Parkway, extends along the River from the Niagara Escarpment across the Lake Ontario Plain to Fort George and Niagara-on-the-Lake. Its extraordinary riverbanks, river terraces, natural habitats, stands of trees, vineyards, orchards and hedgerows combine to create one of the most memorable settings in Southern Ontario.

Although these three irreplaceable landscapes form the actual study site, they do not exist in isolation. The adjacent City of Niagara Falls, the Towns of Niagara-on-the-Lake and Fort Erie, the Regional Municipality of Niagara, the Province of Ontario and the holdings of private citizens all affect and are affected by Ontario’s Niagara Parks.

The careful stewardship of The Niagara Parks Commission brought the study site safely through the last century. It’s appropriate, then, that we begin by recalling the Commission’s impressive past, for it is on that strength that we plan to build the future.

### The Niagara Parks Commission’s First 100 Years

From small seeds great things grow. In 1885, the Ontario Government established The Queen Victoria Niagara Falls Park Commission, setting aside 62.2 hectares as a public park adjacent to the Canadian Horseshoe Falls. Gradually, more and more land came under Provincial protection and now Ontario’s Niagara Parks comprise 1254 hectares, including the ribbon of the Niagara Parkway. Ontario’s Niagara Parks contain a natural wonder of the world, extraordinary river-created landscapes, historical and archaeological sites, golf courses, picnic areas, a campground, a marina, swimming beaches, restaurants, a horticultural school and kilometres of recreational trails and scenic drives.

This combination of heritage and nature wasn't always treated with the respect it deserves. Before the creation of Queen Victoria Park, the area by the Falls was overrun with commercial enterprises. A motley collection of buildings crowded against the edge of the Gorge, leaving only enough room for a narrow alleyway between Ferry Road and Table Rock. Cabbies, runners and persistent concessionaires accosted unwary visitors. Until the founding of the Commission, it was impossible to enjoy the Falls without distractions.

Throughout the first 100 years of Ontario's Niagara Parks, the Commission's policy was "to provide an opportunity for Park visitors to view the Falls, the Gorge and the River under the most pleasant conditions and circumstances possible." The present Niagara Parks Commission is continuing the long tradition of preservation, restoration, commemoration and beautification for the enjoyment of the millions from all over the world who visit the Parks each year.

In 1969, the Commission adopted the following goals to assist in establishing policies and priorities for the development of the lands under its care:

- To maintain, preserve and enhance the beauty and surroundings of the Canadian Horseshoe Falls and the Niagara River, from Fort Erie to Niagara-on-the-Lake;
- To develop, operate and maintain a system of park and recreation areas, historic sites and educational facilities which complement the natural wonders of Niagara Falls and the Niagara River, and which will facilitate and add to the visitor's enjoyment;

- To provide those wishing to view and enjoy the splendour of Niagara Falls an opportunity to do so with ease;
- To provide a broad range of educational opportunities in the fields of horticulture, geology, natural history and the history of the Niagara Frontier;
- To continually seek new methods and means for improving the visitor's experience when visiting the Falls area,
- To encourage complementary uses of lands adjacent to the Parks System, and to work with other groups and agencies who have compatible interests in the Park area;
- To ensure a suitable first and/or last impression for the many millions of foreign visitors to Ontario and to Canada crossing the borders along the Niagara Frontier;
- To encourage and promote the development of the tourism industry in Ontario and Canada; and
- To pursue the self-sustaining nature of the Parks System while recognizing the limitations of compatible and suitable revenue-producing facilities and the long-range need for capital improvements.

These goals, created with considerable foresight, have stood the test of time. They were therefore accepted as the basis for this study. However, the Commission may wish to refine them as a result of the recommendations, priorities and plans contained herein.

*"Think not forever of yourselves, O Chiefs,*

*nor of your own generations of our families;*

*think of our grandchildren and of those yet unborn."*

The Peacemaker,  
Founder of the Six Nations  
Iroquois Confederacy

The wise citizens and legislators who pressed for the creation of The Niagara Parks Commission in 1885 realized the truth of what the natives believed: the Niagara River and its environs are a unique, non-renewable resource that must be preserved and protected not only for our generation, but also for those yet unborn.

When I was appointed Chairman of The Niagara Parks Commission in May 1986, the legacy of the prior 100 years of careful progress by the Commission was obvious. In the two decades preceding 1986, the Commission's development had been guided not only by a 20-year master plan, but also by stable Commission direction and sound staff decision-making, all of which resulted in sufficient economic success to ensure the continuation of the self-sustaining goals set by its founders. However, that master plan was reaching the end of its life. The challenge we faced in the first year following the Commission's centennial was to provide the leadership and direction for the second century.

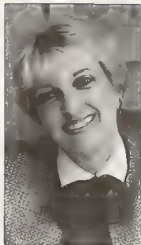
To accept that challenge, we had to face many of the same issues that our predecessors did:

- What is the appropriate balance between commercialism and conservation?
- How can we ensure that the Commission continues to recognize its self-funding mandate and its responsibilities to the people of the Niagara area, the Province, Canada and the world?
- How can we continue to meet the needs of an ever-growing number of visitors while still preserving a delicate resource?
- How can we encourage all interested groups, including citizens, governments and entrepreneurs, to join with us in looking beyond narrow issues of self-interest to face the challenges of the next century?

We took the first step to provide that new direction and leadership in July 1986 with the design and construction of the \$3.6-million Niagara River Recreation Trail, paralleling the river from Niagara-on-the-Lake to Fort Erie. Now more than half completed, it affords local residents and visitors alike the opportunity for a free, safe journey to enjoy nature and Niagara's history.

We took the second step in the spring of 1987 by striking a Commission committee to invite and review proposals from consultants to prepare a long-range plan. Moriyama & Teshima Planners Limited demonstrated the expertise and sensitivity that won the overwhelming support of the Commission.

To assist them, we decided to provide every opportunity for anyone interested in the future of the Parks to participate. We established a Steering Committee composed of Commission members Archie Katzman of St. Catharines, Bill West of Hamilton and myself; we added Jim Keenan, Deputy Minister of Tourism and Recreation for Ontario and Dr. David Drinkwalter of Ontario Hydro.



This committee was actively supported by Dennis Schafer, General Manager of The Niagara Parks Commission. Jane Lowrey served as secretary. Jim Harris, our Director of Planning, coordinated the project, providing a liaison between the consultants, staff, Municipalities, industry and public.

To further broaden the scope of ideas, we established a working Advisory Group with representatives from the Regional Municipality of Niagara, the City of Niagara Falls, the Towns of Niagara-on-the-Lake and Fort Erie, Ontario Hydro, the Niagara Falls Canada Visitor and Convention Bureau, and the Ministries of Culture and Communication, Natural Resources, Tourism and Recreation, and Transportation. The consultants met often with the Steering and Advisory Committees and with many private citizens so that all parties could share in the creation of the long-range plan.

Without a doubt, this effort has been the most comprehensive, participatory and open process ever undertaken in this area. The broad and varied input of the contributors and the effort to work together toward a common goal have already provided a successful model for future cooperation.

We were fortunate that the circle of participants was wide, for it proved impossible to imagine the possibilities for development of the lands of the Commission without considering the potential uses and opportunities for the privately and Municipally owned lands on the periphery. By so doing, we were careful to emphasize that uses of lands outside our jurisdiction were "opportunities" or "possibilities" only and did not represent a desire or intention by the Commission to control or direct their future development. Advisory Group members representing the private-sector tourist industry, adjoining Municipalities, the Region and relevant Provincial Government Ministries enthusiastically participated in this exercise. Indeed, it became clear that the Niagara area's highest potential as a tourist destination will only be realized with the cooperation of these parties, within the framework of an overall plan.

We are delighted at the prospect that we are beginning the second century of The Niagara Parks Commission with a vision that can lead and guide us and our successors in preserving and enhancing our unique resource, while meeting the challenges of today and tomorrow. When fully supported by all interested parties, this vision will ensure that Niagara retains its rightful place as the flagship of tourism and the most important gateway to Ontario and Canada.

Naturally, key Commission decisions to set priorities and determine an appropriate implementation process will continue to challenge us. The imaginative ideas expressed here will have to be further tested against economic realities as the next several years unfold. The degree of cooperation and support received from outside the Commission with respect to these concepts will also have a profound influence on our implementation abilities. Developing this long-range plan has given us an excellent start toward achieving that support and cooperation.

Seldom in one's life is there an opportunity to participate in an exciting undertaking affecting ourselves and, in the words of the Peacemaker, those yet unborn. The Commission and participants have responded with the patience, respect, integrity and humility it deserves. Of this effort and its resulting imaginative 100-Year Vision, we can all be proud.

Pamela Verrill Walker, B.A., LL.B.  
Chairman, The Niagara Parks Commission

Based upon the recommendation of The Niagara Parks Commission's Search Committee, Pamela Verrill Walker, Chairman of the Commission, announced in July 1987 that Moriyama & Teshima Planners Limited would lead a team of consultants undertaking a long-range planning study of The Niagara Parks Commission lands and surrounding areas along the Niagara River from Lake Ontario to Lake Erie.

She also announced the appointment of The Coopers & Lybrand Consulting Group and DS-Lea Associates Limited as members of the Study Team, responsible for the marketing and transportation components, respectively.

The Commission instructed the team to submit a printed report by October 1988.

### Study Goals

In March 1987, The Niagara Parks Commission prepared the following general study goals for a long-range planning study:

- Prepare a comprehensive statement for the preservation and enhancement of the lands of The Niagara Parks Commission and their environs;
- Review and comment on changing recreational and tourist travel patterns in the Niagara area, and provide an assessment of data as it relates to future planning and development;

- Provide a master plan which will be used as a guideline for the orderly progression to improve the visitor's experience in Queen Victoria Park and other related lands from Lake Ontario to Lake Erie; and
- Recognize the Commission as a self-sustaining entity and identify the revenue-producing factors that influence its valuable assets

### Study Objectives

The general goals listed above gave rise to the following detailed study objectives for long-range planning:

- Provide an analysis of the user capacity of Queen Victoria Park from Park planning and tourism points of view;
- Comment upon a detailed study of the visitor now being undertaken by the Federal Government and the Niagara Falls Canada Convention and Tourist Bureau and also include the economic impact of the Falls and Parklands on the Region and Municipality,
- Review the existing physical facilities of the Parks System including buildings, roads and lands, and recommend improvements or acquisitions that would be valuable to the overall objectives;
- Review Ontario Hydro's and Canadian Niagara Power's relationship to the lands of the Commission and determine the implications of future changes for the Parklands;
- Determine how a broader and more diversified use of Commission facilities and lands would enhance the tourist experience; and
- Provide a long-range improvement program for implementation over an extended period of time.

### Response to the Assignment

Subsequent to issuing the above goals, the Commission accepted the Study Team's recommendation for a 100-Year Vision as a framework for the 20-Year Plan.

The Study Goals had called for a master plan that would have been a blueprint for the next 20 years. However, this was not produced due to cost constraints and the duplication of the Federal Tourism Study. The following were therefore eliminated from the original proposal:

- land-use planning analysis;
- identification of local, Regional and Provincial economic benefits;
- statement on strategic significance to local, Regional, Provincial and Canadian economies;
- analysis of revenue and sales activity;
- revenue forecasts for the 20-Year Plan;
- policies and guidelines for compatibility with adjacent land uses,
- long-range financial plan;
- forecast of capital costs; and
- refinement of technical aspects of the transportation proposals

The Commission therefore agreed that the Study Team would produce a *touchstone document* with a 100-Year Vision, 20-Year Plan, Five-Year Action Plan, Planning and Implementation Program and Recommendations.







Niagara Falls is one of the great natural wonders of the world. Its immense force, its awesome beauty and its heart-moving mythology arouse the mind and stir the blood to see, hear and experience it.

As a child in Vancouver who loved rocks, mountains and waterfalls, I was thrilled by Capillano Canyon and by Shannon Falls near Squamish. Yet the mighty Niagara continually pricked my imagination as the one to see someday.

The first time the family and I visited Niagara Falls was in the summer of 1944. The five of us travelled from Hamilton in a borrowed Model T. The occasion was one of rejoicing and of symbolic significance: our first outing together since we were separated in early 1942 by the War Measures Act. Even the indignity of rattling at a snail's pace in a near-antique car could not diminish our happiness.

My first view of the thundering water will be etched forever in my whole being. I stood by the lip of the Horseshoe Falls stunned by its energy and magnificence.

I imagined flying like a seagull up into the rainbow and looking down, then swooping down into the toe of the cataract and peering up. What, I wondered, would it be like walking a tightrope across the Gorge? What is it like going over the Falls in a canoe, as the mythical maid had? What is it like falling and tumbling inside a wooden barrel? It is fear? Exhilaration? Or both? Are life and death the same to a waterfall?

A year later, I again had an immense urge to see the Falls. Forgetting that parents have concerns about a missing child, or maybe because I knew that if I asked for permission I would be refused, I quietly rode off on my second-hand bicycle along Highway 2. It was the first time I had a chance to see Niagara-on-the-Lake – then a quaint town – and the northern portion of the Niagara Parkway. I was deeply moved by the geology, the peaceful landscape, the power of the Whirlpool and, once again, the immensity of the Falls.

As I peddled along, I was evaluating and reconciling in my mind the human things that intruded into these natural elements. What would fit better? To be given an opportunity 40 years later to consider that question again – this time for the future, trying to seek the best legacy to leave for our grandchildren and their children – has been a stirring and enriching experience, both professionally and personally.

From the start, we have strived to be students of this area, listening intently to the roar of the Falls, the torrent in the Gorge, the whispers of the upper River, the stories told by 600 million years of geology, the wisdom of our forebears and the thoughts and comments of all those who shared their ideas with us.

We have tried to experience the 56 kilometres from Lake to Lake in as many ways as possible. We have driven the distance repeatedly, walked extensively in the sensitive areas and flown by helicopter not only over the entire course of the River, but also along the shorelines of Lake Erie and Lake Ontario and along the Welland Canal.

The more we understood this area through research and with our senses and thoughts, the more opportunities we saw for the future. The potential is so great that it staggers the imagination. Tomorrow seems limited only by our minds and our hearts.

Visitor demographics are shifting drastically. There is greater affluence; a greater number of people are travelling, not only regionally and nationally but internationally; people are better educated; older people are travelling more; there is tougher competition for tourist dollars; and there is increased awareness of what fresh tourist revenue means to the country's economy.

A hundred years ago, 250,000 people visited the Niagara Falls area annually. Today visitation exceeds 11 million, a fifty-fold increase. Can we expect a similar increase a century hence – an incredible 500 million or more visitors per year? Do we really want that many? The pounding of so many feet would surely kill the goose that is laying the golden eggs.

In trying to visualize the future, we have a strong and honourable past on which to build. In 1885, The Queen Victoria Niagara Falls Park Commission was created to be financially self-sufficient, to control unbridled commercialism and to allow the public to appreciate the natural beauty of Niagara. With passion, perseverance, planning and actions, The Niagara Parks Commission has preserved for all the people of the world an invaluable treasure. What we are proposing may seem ambitious and overwhelming at first glance, but compared to accomplishments in the first 100 years it may not be ambitious enough.

Today's tourists want fun, education, diversion and entertainment. They demand excitement as well as peace, experiences of nature as well as of people. Niagara can easily meet all these expectations.

The challenge we face, then, is to achieve a balance of preservation and development within a balance of income and expenditure. We want to enhance the visitors' experience from Lake to Lake; lengthen

the visitor's stay, rather than just increasing the number of short-term, daytime visitors; increase visitation in winter and extend visitation into the shoulder seasons of early spring and late fall; decentralize the visitation load especially in summer; meet the needs of older travellers, the handicapped, families, youths and children, the well-educated, the well-heeled and the increasing number of international travellers who have the choice of attractions world-wide and who are demanding a higher quality of goods, accommodation and services.

To respond to the greater number of visitors and inspire them to extend their stay requires appropriately intensifying, increasing and diversifying the attractions; creating convenient linkages to decentralized activity nodes; and adding signage and gateways to provide information and new experiences. These gateways, which combine visitor reception facilities and tourist information centres, can be attractions in their own right – distinctive and inviting introductions to the Niagara experience.

But what about the bigger picture? The potential for greater benefit? Consider Murray Hill, situated centrally above Queen Victoria Park overlooking both the American and Horseshoe Falls. It should form an important part in developing an exciting Gateway to Ontario and Canada. This Gateway is the key to introducing and enticing visitors into the Province and the Region. This Gateway will also serve to physically link and integrate Ontario's Niagara Parks, the City, the private sector, the local citizens and the visitors within a multi-level experience. The Gateway has already received broad public support in Niagara.

I believe Socrates was right when he said that life is like archery – there must be a target if a person is to succeed. If we are to continue breathing life into this project, it too must have a clear target. The target for Ontario's Niagara Parks is the preservation of nature – nurturing



and enhancing not only the goose that is laying the golden eggs, but caring for its nesting grounds and supporting natural environment. As cities everywhere grow larger and denser and as institutions become more and more alike, there will be a shift of perception. The main attraction of Canada – and Niagara in particular – will be nature, majestic and breathtaking such as the Falls, and delicate and subtle such as wild flowers among the rocks.

This focus should not be compromised by The Commission. Our plans and concepts squarely aim at this target. They demonstrate the compatibility of preservation and new development that will attract and delight a diverse audience and will enhance the prosperity of the communities and the private sector while maintaining the Commission's financial self-sufficiency. The emphasis for new development is on quality and imagination; on fit with the land; and on the enhancement of a unique character, distinctively Canadian.

Rather than producing a master plan that outlines a step-by-step blueprint for the future, we have attempted to provide a different kind of blueprint: open, flexible for input related to issues beyond the scope of this study, but pragmatically focused on Ontario's Niagara Parks as the most important visitor destination in Ontario and Canada.

The vision presented here is perhaps the better for not proposing rigid tasks and timetables. Rather, it represents fundamental thinking about the next century. This approach provides a base and direction while allowing for later questioning, research, analysis, discussions and shifts in emphasis without losing sight of the primary purpose. We thus see this report as a touchstone document, a rallying point for future planners and a common vision for today, embracing the needs of both the visitors and the Commission. From this touchstone, interested parties can build a dialogue, refine goals, and then act upon them.

One hundred years, is, of course, an enormous timeframe. We are also recommending plans to be refined and implemented over the next 20 years as well as an immediate Five-Year Action Plan. Should it so desire, these shorter-term plans can be carried out by The Niagara

Parks Commission alone, within its holdings, independent of other jurisdictions and authorities.

Yet, as we see the future, the benefits will accrue to the local residents, the Municipalities, Ontario Hydro, the Region, the Province, Canada and the private sector, as well as The Niagara Parks Commission. We are recommending a process of joint commitment: cooperatively setting major goals, conciliating some of the jurisdictional fragmentation, and following through with coordinated but independent actions by all parties. Without this spirit of cooperation, the benefits of the key projects will likely fall short of their potentials. In our ever-shrinking world of electronics and instant communication, not to do so is to relinquish the competitive and economic positions to those who do. It is a time to think globally and act locally and, conversely, to think locally together and act globally.

We are grateful for the conscientious comments, criticisms and concepts extended to us by the Steering Committee, the Advisory Group and all those who discussed the project with us. To Jim Harris, the Director of Planning, our untiring liaison officer and coordinator, we extend our thanks.

We thank The Niagara Parks Commission for this opportunity to present our document and for having the conceptual scope to approach the next 100 years with sensitivity, humanity and feeling as big as the Falls.

Raymond Moriyama, O.C., M. Arch.,

F.R.A.I.C., M.C.I.P., R.C.A., F.R.S.A., LL.D (h.c.), D. Eng.

This study required both a comprehensive process uniquely suited to the people and land along the Niagara River and an extraordinary depth of familiarity with the Niagara Region.

To gain direct knowledge of the human and natural landscapes of this area, we explored it in detail on foot and by car, helicopter and airplane. We researched the prehistory and history, the geology and ecology, the tourist sites, the communities, the traffic patterns and the interrelated uses of adjacent lands.

To better understand their relationship with Ontario's Niagara Parks, we held discussions with private tourism and attractions operators, owners of lands near the Parks and interested citizens.

We spoke with the Regional Municipality of Niagara, the City of Niagara Falls and the Towns of Niagara-on-the-Lake and Fort Erie to gain an overview of their long-term plans for adjacent lands. We met with the Niagara Frontier Region of the New York State Office of Parks, Reservation and Historic Preservation (the American counterpart of The Niagara Parks Commission) to identify areas of mutual concern.

We also held discussions with several Ontario Provincial Ministries including Tourism and Recreation, Transportation, Culture and Communication, and Municipal Affairs.

We reviewed with Ontario Hydro its plans for power generation within the Parks and in the City of Niagara Falls. We also reviewed the holdings of Parks Canada, which is the federal authority that operates several historical and natural sites in the Region.

Building on this background information, we undertook the vigorous process of brainstorming and consultation outlined below.

### ***Working Sessions***

Every three weeks, we held working sessions in Niagara Falls with the Steering Committee and Advisory Group to review our progress and receive their comments.

### ***Think-Tank Session***

For two days in October 1987, we met in an open and creative session with the Steering Committee, the Advisory Group and the staff of The Niagara Parks Commission to explore and develop images, roles and concepts for Ontario's Niagara Parks for the next 100 years. Following this think-tank session, we further refined the concepts with the Commissioners and received their comments.

### ***Public Meetings***

On December 17, 1987, we made presentations to interested citizens, including members of the private sector. After each presentation, we received written comments which we used to continue refining the concepts.

### ***Presentation to Government Officials***

Finally, on January 26, 1988, we presented the 100-Year Vision and the 20-Year Plan to regional members of the Federal and Provincial Parliaments; the Council of the Regional Municipality of Niagara; Mayors and Councils of Niagara Falls, Fort Erie and Niagara-on-the-Lake; and The Niagara Parks Commissioners.

## Work Process

This study was developed through a process of consultation and collaboration which we hope, in some small way, can be a model for the kind of multi-jurisdictional, public-sector and private-sector cooperation that will be needed to realize the full potential of Ontario's Niagara Parks.

As with all enterprises with diverse participants, we first had to divide responsibilities, establish communication processes and set up a schedule that everyone could accept. Once that had been done, we proceeded through the phases of the project:

- Gathering and analyzing information on the Study Area and reporting to The Niagara Parks Commission on the planning context, transportation framework and tourism patterns and trends
- Undertaking an on-site analysis of Ontario's Niagara Parks from Lake Erie to Lake Ontario. Identifying opportunities for new activities, facilities, amenities and programs. Identifying constraints
- Assessing the quality of visitor experience, including satisfaction, expectations, knowledge of Parks offerings and preferences for future development
- Developing a 100-Year Vision for Ontario's Niagara Parks
- Developing a comprehensive 20-Year Plan based on the 100-Year Vision, including phasing and priorities

- Assessing the current Niagara Parks Commission marketing efforts and their role in the 20-Year Plan. Recommending marketing strategies to achieve targets
- Developing strategies and mechanisms to enable the Commission to elaborate and refine the opportunities of the 20-Year Plan.
- Presenting the 100-Year Vision and 20-Year Plan to the Commission, the public and government groups.
- Preparing draft plans and reports for review by the Steering Committee, Advisory Group, Commissioners and Commission staff.
- Presenting this printed report to The Niagara Parks Commission

Although great effort was taken in devising a framework to facilitate this study, the overall direction of our conceptual planning was determined not only by these mechanisms, but also by the context of the rich natural and human history of Ontario's Niagara Parks. In the next section, we review that context in detail.





If we were to look down on Niagara from space, the first thing that would catch our eyes would be the Falls, that sheer drop over which the Niagara River rushes in a magnificent, churning, never-ending torrent.

And yet, among this majesty there are mysteries. Take the old St. David's Channel, for instance. From our vantage point, we can see that the cliff that curves around the Whirlpool is unlike those of the nearby Gorge. It has no layered rock face. This steep, woody slope looks out of place here and, in a way, it is. It is a remnant of an earlier, different waterfall – a prehistoric ravine carved by a cataract that flowed before the last Ice Age, now plugged with glacial deposits.

St. David's Channel reminds us of the enormous number of circumstances that must combine to create a natural wonder. Niagara Falls is the product of staggering forces. Its great plunge, 51 metres from misty top to roiling bottom, is the result of a drama spanning millennia, an incredible tale of prehistoric oceans, land in upheaval and ice a thousand metres thick.

## The Origin of the Rock

The story of the Falls began 600 million years ago. The future site of the Great Lakes stood at the centre of a broad, shallow sea that covered much of North America. Beneath these waters were the already ancient Pre-Cambrian rocks of the Canadian Shield – the bowl-shaped basement of our continent.

For 100 million years, rain and wind and the lapping of waves ground rocks into powder. This material collected, layer after layer, in the concave sea bottom, depositing soft sediments over top of the harder Pre-Cambrian rock.

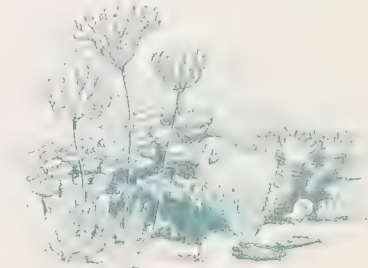
Suddenly, the Earth shook, pushing forth the Appalachian mountains. Rivers flowed in new patterns, carrying mud westward. Where the rivers intermingled, huge muddy deltas formed, sprawling over 600 kilometres, from east of what is now Lake Ontario to beyond the present shore of Lake Huron. That mud, cemented by the eons, forms the distinctive purple-red shale called the Queenston Formation and the sandy ledge-forming rocks of Niagara Gorge.

The waters over the future site of the Falls were tropical, for Central North America lay much closer to the equator than it does today. In this warm sea, tiny creatures built massive honey-combed reefs that appeared as gray and white shoals

in the troughs of waves. As these coral-makers died, the churning of water broke up their homes, sending a rain of lime dust to the sea floor. The Lockport Dolomite, which forms the caprock of the Niagara Escarpment, consists largely of these ground-up coral reefs.

By 300 million years ago, the inland sea had drained away. Its legacy: a saucer of sediments atop the Pre-Cambrian shield nearly five kilometres deep. Fifty million years later, while the first reptiles were slowly establishing their dominion over the planet, great rivers criss-crossed central North America, etching patterns into this soft, sandy rock and undermining the harder limestones. This random erosion formed the basins for Lakes Michigan and Huron, and, later, Erie and Ontario.

From the shadows of primeval forests, the first warm-blooded animals emerged: tiny shrew-like mammals and birds with teeth. Meanwhile, the reptiles grew larger and more sophisticated, becoming the dinosaurs – the mightiest creatures ever to walk the land. Plants, too, were evolving. After millennia of monotonous green, the countryside exploded with colour as the first flowers appeared.



600 million years ago, Niagara was at the bottom of a shallow sea.

Then disaster struck. Something, perhaps an asteroid impact, wiped out the terrible lizards and all other lifeforms on Earth with body masses over 50 kilograms. The way was paved for our rodent ancestors to begin their slow, 60-million-year climb to supremacy, until finally, half a world away, the first humans stood up and surveyed the beauty around them.

All the while, though, Canada had been slowly moving farther north, a raft of basalt and granite floating upon a magma sea. This continental drift put us right in the path of a devastating natural force that would completely change the landscape.

### **Glaciers Re-Shape the Land**

It happened four times in rapid succession, each time moulding North American the way a sculptor might re-shape a lump of clay. During the last Ice Age – the Wisconsin Glaciation – the north polar cap expanded greatly, covering most of Canada in a vast sheet of ice a kilometre and a half thick.

Centimetre by centimetre, year by year, the ice sheet grew, pushing ahead of it those things that would move, mercilessly crushing those that would not. Eventually the face of the glacier, taller than the tallest skyscraper, extended east and west from where tourists view Niagara Falls today.

Twelve thousand years ago, the ice drew back far enough to expose a low channel to the Hudson Valley, located near the present site of Rome, New York. The waters in the western end of the Ontario basin began to drain through this new outlet.

Year after year, the water level sank until the Niagara Escarpment was exposed. Lake Erie

spilled over the top of the Escarpment to a lower level, a basin called Lake Iroquois that was the forerunner of Lake Ontario. At first, the Erie waters drained to the lower lake by way of a small intermediate lake called Tonawanda, which, in turn, drained over the escarpment through several spillways. But gradually the drainage from Erie to Iroquois concentrated into one channel, the ancestor of the Niagara River.

Lake Iroquois was roughly the same shape as the Lake Ontario it was to become, but its water level was higher and its basin larger. Ice that still lay near The Thousand Islands blocked it from the St. Lawrence Valley. Niagara-on-the-Lake was submerged and the Iroquois waters lapped at the top of Queenston Heights.

Finally, the ice sheet stopped growing, bested by a slight increase in the average yearly temperature. The leading edge of the glacier began to melt, forming a giant muddy mess shot through with the boulders it had picked up during its journey. At last, the ice pulled away from The Thousand Islands. In a spectacular rush, the waters of Lake Iroquois began to surge through this newly-opened channel and eventually drained into the Atlantic.



The glacier waned, but the melt water – hundreds of cubic kilometres of it – had to go somewhere. Much of it flowed off the sides of the continent into the oceans. Some of it evaporated. The rest pooled into the hollows and ruts scraped into the land by the glacier, including the vastly enlarged basins of the Great Lakes. The Earth's crust, relieved of the tremendous weight of the ice, began to spring back, but it did so unevenly, tipping to the south. That changed the drainage patterns, starting the flow of water through the Niagara River.

Great animals followed the retreating glacier northward. Some of these species would survive to the present. Others, such as the dire wolf and the mastodon, wouldn't be able to keep up with the changing climate. And others still, such as the cervelces, a deer with antlers three metres wide, would succumb to the spears of the first humans to walk the land, almost 12,000 years ago. A new era had begun.



**Mastodons and other great animals roamed the sub-arctic landscape of Niagara before the River began to flow.**

The first humans arrived in Niagara Region almost 12,000 years ago, just in time to witness the birth of the Falls. The land was different then, consisting of tundra and spruce forest. During this time (the Palaeo-Indian Period, which lasted until 9,000 years ago), Niagara was inhabited by the Clovis people. These nomadic hunters likely camped along the old Lake Erie shoreline, living in simple, tiny dwellings. They left little to mark their tenure except chipped stones, including large, fluted projectile points, perhaps used to fell the caribou, mastodons, moose and elk that roamed the land.

By 9,500 years ago a deciduous forest apparently covered southernmost Ontario. This forest supported the hunter-gatherers of the Archaic Period (9,000 to 3,000 years ago) with a diet of deer, moose, fish and plants. Small groups hunted in the winter, feeding on nuts and animals attracted to the forest. Larger groups came together during the summer, setting up fishing camps at the mouths of rivers and along lakeshores.



The Woodland Period lasted from 3,000 to 300 years ago, culminating in the peak of Iroquois culture in southern Ontario. Corn, bean and squash agriculture provided the main sources of food. With their bellies full, the Iroquois had time for other pursuits and the population boomed. Small palisaded villages were built, with nuclear or extended families occupying individual longhouses. During this period, burial rituals and ceramics were introduced to Ontario. Society became more complex with a political system based on extended kinship and inter-village alliances.

When the European explorers and missionaries arrived at the beginning of the 17th Century, the Iroquoian villages were under the direction of various chiefs elected from the major clans. In turn, these villages were allied within powerful tribal confederacies.

Unfortunately, inter-tribal warfare with the Five Nations Iroquois of New York State, made worse by the intrusion of the Europeans, dispersed the three Ontario confederacies, the Huron, the Petun and the Neutral. Niagara ceased to be the territory of those who lived in harmony with nature.

Still, this fascinating period of native occupation cries out for interpretation and study. Since human settlement requires drinking water, sites within 150 metres of rivers and lakeshores have the greatest archaeological potential. Palaeo-Indian sites in Niagara would most likely be associated with the series of relic beach ridges that once formed the shore of early Lake Erie.

In May 1535, Jacques Cartier left France to explore the New World. Although he never saw Niagara Falls, the Indians he met along the St. Lawrence River told him about it. Samuel de Champlain visited Canada in 1608. He, too, heard stories of the mighty cataract, but never visited it. Étienne Brûlé, the first European to see Lakes Ontario, Erie, Huron and Superior, may also have been the first to behold the Falls, in 1615.

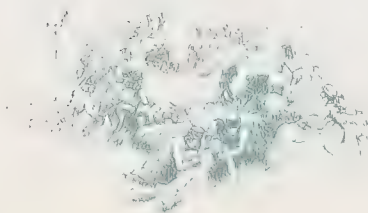
That same year, the Recollet missionary explorers arrived in Ontario. They were followed a decade later by the Jesuits. It was a Jesuit Father, Gabriel Lalemant, who first recorded the Iroquois name for the river – *Onguiaadha*, meaning “The Strait.” “Niagara” is a simplification of the original.

In 1651, during the fur-trade rivalry between the Huron and Iroquois that was first precipitated by the French, the Iroquois wiped out the Neutrals. Until the American Revolution, they managed to keep white settlers out of Niagara almost completely.



An early illustration of the Falls from *Gentleman's Magazine*, February 1751.

In December 1678, Recollet priest Louis Hennepin visited Niagara Falls. Nineteen years later, he published the first engraving of the Falls in his book *Nouvelle Découverte*. The Falls obviously made a great impression on Hennepin, for he estimated their height to be 183 metres, more than three times what it really is.



Sites of battles dot the Riverside.

In 1812, United States President James Madison declared war on Canada. Artifacts from that war dot the riverside, as do monuments erected later, such as the one to Sir Isaac Brock. Recently, the skeletons of members of the U.S. Army were found near Old Fort Erie.

Following the War of 1812, the region began the slow process of rebuilding itself. Queenston became a bustling community, but Chippawa was the big centre, with distilleries and factories.

In the 1820s, a stairway was built down the bank at Table Rock and the first ferry service across the lower River began. By 1827, a paved road had been built up from the ferry landing to the top of

the bank on the Canadian side. This site became the prime location for hotel development and the Clifton was built there, after which the Clifton Hill is named.

Niagara has perhaps the most complex transportation history of any area in North America. The first Welland Canal was completed in 1829. Between 1849 and 1962, thirteen bridges were constructed across the Niagara River Gorge. Four of them remain.

The roadway between Niagara-on-the-Lake and Chippawa was the first improved highway in Upper Canada, and the first designated King's Highway. The first stage coach in Upper Canada operated on this roadway between the late 1700s and 1896. The first railroad in Upper Canada opened in 1841 with horse-drawn carriages running between Chippawa and Queenston. In 1854 it was converted to steam and relocated to serve what was to become the Town of Niagara Falls.



A photograph of the edge of the Gorge looking toward Table Rock, circa 1870s.

In 1855, John August Roebling, the designer of the Brooklyn Bridge, built the Niagara Railway Suspension Bridge, the first bridge of its type in the world. Between the late 1700s and the middle 1800s, boats were the main way to get to Niagara Falls. By 1896, three boats plied the route between Toronto and Queenston.

One of the first electrified street car services was provided in Niagara, and in 1893 the Queenston/Chippawa Railway carried boat passengers from Queenston to Table Rock and beyond. In 1902, a railway was constructed across the Queenston Suspension Bridge. Later it was extended along the lower Gorge on the American side of the River, connecting back into Canada at the Upper Arch Bridge. This transit line, the Great Gorge Route, continued in service until the Depression. The use of boats declined as tourists increasingly chose to visit Niagara by automobile, bus or train.



**The Niagara Railway Suspension Bridge built in 1855, the first of its length in the world.**



**Niagara Falls Park and River Railway cars lined up at the Queenston Docks to take passengers to Queen Victoria Park, circa 1900.**



**Table Rock during the first years of Queen Victoria Park, circa 1899.**

Tourism travel to the Falls began in the 1820s, and within 50 years it had increased ten-fold to become the area's dominant industry.

After World War I, automobile touring became popular. As a response, attractions and accommodations sprang up in strip developments, much of which still survives.

This year between 12 and 15 million people will cross into Canada on the four international bridges between Fort Erie and Queenston. Some 62% of those entering Canada are from the U.S., and this rises to almost 75% during the summer. At the end of The Niagara Parks Commission's first 100 years, Niagara Falls has become one of the world's most popular tourist destinations.



**The natural wonder of the Falls continues to draw increasing numbers of visitors from around the world to experience its power and majesty.**



**Picnicking in Queen Victoria Park, circa 1890.**

0 1000 2000 3000m





The Niagara Sites



All sites in Ontario's Niagara Parks have strong potentials for more active use, interpretation and visitor enjoyment. The Study Team reviewed all sites individually, looking at their physical evolution and characteristics, their histories and the opportunities they suggest for the Plan. The review presented here begins in the south at Old Fort Erie, proceeds downstream to the Falls and continues on to Fort George.

## A. Old Fort Erie

The Old Fort Erie site powerfully illuminates the relationship between developing human culture and the Niagara River. It is located on the 400-million-year-old sediments of the Onondaga Escarpment. This escarpment once dammed Lake Erie, which was then swollen with glacial melt-water, causing the early Niagara River to enlarge to nearly double its current breadth. When the River finally receded, it left behind the raised, parallel erosion terraces visible here.

As the peoples of the Archaic Period spread throughout the region, they made great use of the rich supply of flint in the rocky ledges of the Lake Erie shoreline. From these easily worked stones they fashioned tools and weapons. The terraces and riverbanks here were occupied in a succession of villages and encampments as far back as 2980 B.C. at Surma and 1723 B.C. at the Fort Erie Quarry.

Conch shells from Florida, obsidian points from the Rocky Mountains and native copper from Northern Ontario have been found here, suggesting that this was a trading crossroads for the continent.

French fur traders built a trading post here in 1750. In 1764, shortly after the ceding of New France to Britain at the close of the Seven Years War, the British began building the first fort on the River bank, slightly north of where the present Fort Erie stands. This fort was a stopover for ships carrying merchandise, troops and passengers to the upper Great Lakes.

Harking back to the forces that shaped these lands, the original fort was destroyed in March



**Old Fort Erie**

1779 by masses of ice pushed ashore by a violent storm. A second fort was begun a short distance south, directly in front of the present site. It stood until February 5, 1803, when it too was destroyed by ice.

A third Fort Erie, begun in 1804, remained unfinished when the War of 1812 broke out. Twice occupied by American forces, it was the scene of an unsuccessful attack by the British in August 1814, which left 1550 of their soldiers killed or wounded. In November of that year, the occupying U.S. forces blew it up.

In 1937, the Federal and Provincial Governments joined forces to restore the Fort to the way it had looked during the War of 1812. It was officially opened to tourists on Dominion Day, 1939.



Since 1979, The Niagara Parks Commission has increased the emphasis on the learning opportunities that the Fort offers. Once across the draw-bridge, tourists find themselves transported to another age. They are taken through the many rooms by guards dressed in uniforms of the British 8th Foot Regiment. During the summer, manoeuvres are carried out, including firing a cannon, changing the guard and drill exercises.

The extensive human history at the Fort strongly suggests that if researched, developed and interpreted comprehensively and with great care, it could become one of the most significant cultural sites in Canada. With imaginative portrayals of these early communities, it would be an outstanding attraction for students and other visitors.



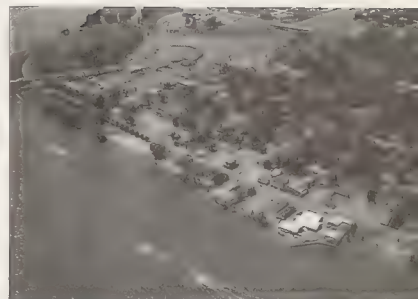
## **B. Town of Fort Erie Riverfront**

The Riverfront along the Town of Fort Erie has long been recognized as a good place to live. On the edge of the Niagara River, just north of the Peace Bridge, is a 5000-year-old Palaeo-Indian settlement. Close to the town's main street are the remains of an extensive community of Middle-Archaic people, the first farmers.

The Town of Fort Erie was established in 1764 as a British military post. In the late 19th Century, it was an important railway centre, where the train met the ferry to cross over to Buffalo. But with the opening of the International Railway Bridge in 1873, Fort Erie was soon outstripped by the neighbouring village of Bridgeburg. In 1932, they amalgamated, keeping the name of Fort Erie with all its historical significance.

The Niagara Parkway passes through the Fort Erie Riverfront. A strip of commercial development lies between the Peace Bridge and the central business district. Much of this development is related to tourist activity and could be helped by a general face-lifting and the introduction of a more pleasant treatment of the River's edge and the re-landscaping of the Niagara Parkway itself. In addition, the relationship of the central business district to the Parkway could be greatly improved, making it much more attractive for tourists to stop, walk around, enjoy the parks and Riverfront, and visit the town.

With the Old Fort, the Parklands and the historic sites and visitor facilities along the River, The Niagara Parks Commission is well positioned to entice the five million people who annually cross the Peace Bridge to visit here.



### **C. Landscape of the South Boulevard of the Niagara Parkway**

The landscape character along most of the South Boulevard of the Niagara Parkway is informal, consisting of trees and shrubs growing within areas of grass maintained by the Commission.

In residential and commercial areas and in entry areas such as the Peace Bridge, Fort Erie and Chippawa, the character is more formal, consisting of street trees, flowering trees and shrubs planted in geometric patterns. In nearly all these areas, additional planting would strengthen, reinforce and visually unify the landscape

Along the South Boulevard, quality planting has been neglected or is struggling to grow in poor soils. Many parking areas lack screening and, therefore, are uninviting to visitors. Additional shade trees and shrubs for buffering could make these areas more appealing.

The recently completed Niagara River Recreation Trail allows joggers, hikers, bicyclists and people in wheelchairs to enjoy the beauty of Niagara's sites up close.



**The Niagara River Recreation Trail.**

### **D. Frenchman's Creek**

This natural area, extending from the River's edge to the Queen Elizabeth Way, is critical to maintaining wildlife along the South Boulevard. With its large, regenerating natural environment of water and woodlands, Frenchman's Creek presents opportunities for nature study and recreation. The population of birds suggests that it should become a wildlife sanctuary, protected from the impacts of encroaching development.

Frenchman's Creek is also the site of the landing of the Fenian Raiders. The Fenians were an Irish brotherhood organized in the United States to help the movement for Ireland's independence. On June 1, 1866, some 1,340 Fenians came ashore on the Canadian side of the Niagara River just north of Fort Erie. Eager for action against England, they planned to invade and conquer Canada, then hold it as ransom in return for Irish independence. The next day, they engaged British forces at Ridgeway. Trounced, the Fenians retreated in confusion to Buffalo. This page from Canadian history requires on-site recognition.



**Frenchman's Creek**

### E. Miller's Creek

The Niagara Parks Commission's recreation facilities along the South Boulevard are centred on a complex of campgrounds and marinas at Miller's Creek. The Commission also owns large wooded areas near here. The camping and marina facilities, although well-used, are outdated. Given the growing demand for quality outdoor and water-based recreational facilities, the total site has the potential to be developed as an outstanding park.



Miller's Creek Campground and Marina.

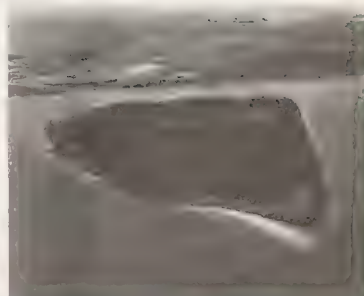
### F. Navy Island

An oasis of mature forest and wildlife in the Niagara River, Navy Island was settled originally by the Lamoka people of the late Archaic Period, 4000 years ago, and, later, by the Meadowood culture peoples, 3000 years ago. Their arrowheads and scrapers have been found along the eroding shoreline. During the early influx of Europeans, the French, who called this place *Ile de la Marina*, built four *bateaux* here which they used to supply their posts on the upper Great Lakes.

Later, the British established a shipyard here, where, from 1761 to 1764, they built the first vessels to sail the upper Great Lakes under their flag. When Pontiac's western Indians attacked British outposts following the ceding of New France, these sailing ships were used to move reinforcements to the upper lakes.

During the War of 1812, the British built a blockhouse and stockade on Navy Island. A detachment was also stationed here. On December 14, 1837, William Lyon Mackenzie and 200 supporters seized the island, setting up a provisional government, constructing batteries and entrenching the blockhouse. The British bombarded the rebels and they retreated to the American mainline on January 11, 1838. In the years that followed, many squatters took up residence and farmed here.

In 1875, the Queen's Hotel was established. This wood-frame structure was a popular summer resort until it was destroyed by fire in 1910.



Today, Navy Island has regenerated and healed itself with mature forests. The Federal Government has leased it to The Niagara Parks Commission since the 1930s. This National Historic Site, with its compelling history and diverse ecology, presents exceptional learning and interpretation opportunities. If developed with sensitivity, Navy Island could have a continuing role as a natural sanctuary and place of learning.

### G. Chippawa

The village of Chippawa, at the confluence of the Welland and Niagara Rivers, is an important historical and early-industrial site. In December 1678, a French exploration party, including Father Louis Hennepin, camped at the mouth of the Welland River.

When the Niagara River became an international boundary after the American War of Independence, the British choose Chippawa as a new portage site for goods bound for the Great Lakes. The resulting volume of trade compelled the government to open a customs office here.

The thriving village became the southern terminus of the Portage Road. Many early tourists spent their nights at Chippawa and visited the Falls on horseback. From Chippawa cargo was loaded on York Boats and polled or rowed upstream to

Fort Erie for trading with the Indians. On the return voyage, the York Boats were loaded with furs bartered from the Indians along the Great Lakes. The Portage Road was strategic during the War of 1812, forming part of the only supply route between Fort Erie and Fort George.

When that war broke out, Chippawa had 20 or so houses, a few taverns and the British wharf. On July 5, 1812, Brigadier-General Winfield Scott led American troops against the town. The British soundly defeated the attackers.

After the war, Chippawa flourished. Its industries included shipbuilding, warehousing, foundries, breweries, tanneries and saw mills. However, the extension of the Welland Canal to Port Colborne in 1833 caused a major decline in Chippawa's business. To compensate for this, construction of the horse-drawn Erie and Ontario railway was begun. But the town never regained its former glory and today Chippawa is a quiet village. The tree-lined South Boulevard of the Niagara Parkway has replaced the Portage Road of early days, but, as in the past, tourists who are visiting the Falls also come here. Chippawa still echoes with its history. The docks, early industries, river activity and re-creation of battles could become the historical basis for further development and interpretation.



**The South Boulevard at Chippawa at the confluence of the Welland and Niagara Rivers.**

#### H. The Dufferin Islands

The Dufferin Islands are secluded in a bay of the River and bordered by high glacial banks. Water gently flows around them in a series of small waterfalls that empty into pools enjoyed by swimmers, boaters and fishers.

This idyllic setting is a startling contrast to the way things were less than 200 years ago. Then, the River rushed around four tiny islands at the head of the bay and one large island in its centre. A saw and grist mill and an iron foundry stood side by side on the banks at the entrance to the islands. The air was rent by the sound of water wheels, wooden gears meshing and the shearing of logs into lumber. A haze of fumes came from the crude clay furnaces that purified bog iron, and from natural gas flares used to make the first wrought iron in Upper Canada.

The present Dufferin Islands remain a favourite recreational area for locals and visitors, thanks to picnic tables, scenic paths and an excellent swimming area. These uses should be encouraged through the further provision of quality facilities. The Dufferin Islands should become a pedestrian precinct with a promenade developed in place of the roadway, eliminating all vehicular traffic. The early industrial uses, unique geology and natural history of the islands should be interpreted for those walking along the promenade.



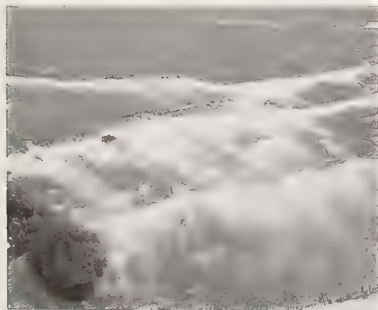
The Dufferin Islands are the result of the River being channeled toward the shore by the rocks of the Falls Rapids.



Visitors enjoying themselves at the Dufferin Islands.

### I. Falls Rapids

Although there are many ways for visitors to approach the Falls, none is more dramatic than walking along the Falls Rapids, as the magnificent Horseshoe gradually unfolds before them. Here, the River rushes over shelves of Lockport dolomite, sculpted by prehistoric rivers into an ancient valley that descends to the brink of the cataract. The visitor's anticipation heightens as he or she moves along the rapids toward the thunder and plume of mist. On some days, lucky visitors get to see a giant rainbow arching over the rapids. The redevelopment of the walk along the Falls Rapids presents new opportunities to create landscaped and interpretation settings for pedestrians to enjoy. Programmed coloured lights and lasers should be used to dramatize the Rapids at night.



The Falls Rapids.

### J. "The Hollow" at Queen Victoria Park

The same river dynamics that formed the Dufferin Islands also produced an area in Queen Victoria Park originally known as "The Hollow." The Niagara River, rushing to the Falls, often overflowed here, tearing at the base of the high bank of the Treed Moraine (the landscape feature that separates Queen Victoria Park from the City) and carrying off the glacial sand and gravel. This debris was left on the flood plain when the River receded, gradually building up a flat table of land.

John Burch built saw and grist mills here in 1786, which were the first industrial users of the waters near the Falls on the west bank of the River. The chance to harness the River's power soon attracted other industries and a hamlet grew up between the mills and the high bank. This idyllic setting wasn't to last for long, though. American forces torched all the buildings on July 26, 1814, after the Battle of Lundy's Lane.

After the war, the grist mill was rebuilt and enlarged and a fulling and cloth mill were added. In 1826, Zeba Gay established a factory for cutting nails from hoop iron. But fire again ravaged the area on September 30, 1874, destroying the mills.

When the Commissioners for the Queen Victoria Niagara Falls Park took over The Hollow in 1888 only the charred ruins remained. The area was renamed The Flats. Beginning in 1902 and lasting for almost 20 years, The Flats were torn up by the construction of the Canadian Niagara and Electrical Development Company powerhouses. Three Ontario Power Company conduits were laid in the rock and soil of The Flats, close to the base of the high bank. The last conduit was laid in 1917-18.

This Hollow is now occupied by the Greenhouse, The Niagara Parks Commission Service Yards and the Canadian Niagara and Toronto Power Generating Stations. Of the industrial activity that was so much a part of this area in the early 1800s, only ghosts remain. Interpretation facilities should be added to remind visitors of these early settlers who first harnessed the power of Niagara's water.



View of "The Hollow" looking north toward Clifton Hill, circa 1860.



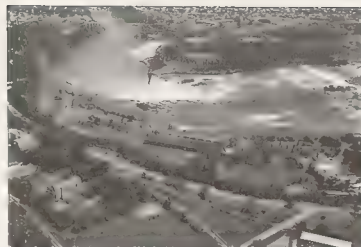
### K. Queen Victoria Park

The Niagara River is an outlet for four of the largest fresh-water lakes in the world. Although it measures only 56 kilometres along its western channel, it has a huge 91 metre drop in elevation.

If the Niagara River had simply eroded across a flat plain, it wouldn't have produced a natural wonder of the world. The magic of the Falls is the result of a startling series of coincidences.

Cut into the Lockport dolomite that underlies the Falls and Upper Rapids is the pre-glacial Falls-Chippawa Valley. This rocky floor beneath Queen Victoria Park slopes towards the southwest and was carved by an ancient flow of water running in the opposite direction of the present Niagara River.

The Upper Rapids mark where the River descends over the east bank of this otherwise buried valley. Here, the River turns nearly at a right angle, causing the Falls to climb the lateral steeped bank of the valley. The Treed Moraine was eroded by the curving waters of the young river, flowing at twice



**The Niagara River descends over the Rapids of an ancient valley toward the Falls and creates the Niagara Gorge.**

its present width. The resulting erosion exposed the rocky floor of the pre-glacial valley at Queen Victoria Park. Had it not been for the Falls-Chippawa Valley establishing the basins for the Falls and the Upper Rapids, the mighty cataract we marvel at today would not exist.

Queen Victoria Park was the first of Ontario's Niagara Parks. On May 24, 1893, eight years after the Park opened, the Niagara Falls Park and River Railway began operating. It carried 354,000 passengers here from the Queenston Docks in its first year, ushering in a new era of Niagara tourism.

Queen Victoria Park has long been a people place, inviting sightseers, picnickers and those who just want to relax. That tradition should continue. New attractions would extend visitors beyond the Falls and throughout the Park. The fascinating geological and physical processes that have combined to create it should be interpreted for the millions of visitors who come here each year.



**A Niagara Park and River Railway car in Queen Victoria Park, circa 1895.**



### **L. Oakes Garden Theatre**

Oakes Garden Theatre opened on September 18, 1937. Fan-shaped, with the stage placed so that the panorama of the Falls forms a backdrop, it is built on varying levels, taking advantage of the contours of the ground and incorporating a foundation wall of the old Clifton Hotel. At the rear there is a curved pergola connecting two open pavilions, one aligned on the axis of the Horseshoe Falls, the other on that of the American Falls. In front of the pergola is a broad, curved lawn. Sloping terraces, rock gardens, lily ponds, shrubbery and wide promenades adjoin the amphitheatre.

For years, the theatre animated visits to the Park with its outdoor performances, including plays, dances, concerts, exhibits and festivals.

Recently, there has been a decrease in the number of programs and activities here. The Oakes Garden Theatre needs repairs and updating so that it can continue its tradition of contributing to the entertainment of visitors to the Parks.



**Oakes Garden Theatre.**

### **M. The Whirlpool Rapids**

Niagara's most spectacular display of rapids is located in a narrow gorge originally cut by the ancestral Niagara River that created the buried St. David's Gorge.

The Whirlpool Rapids are caused by blocks of dolomite that choke the River in a narrow channel, reducing its depth to only 12 metres. The water, churning at 50 kilometres an hour, drops 15 metres through the short distance of the Rapids. This part of the Gorge, extending from the Eddy Basin near the Whirlpool to just south of the railway bridge, formed during a time when only waters from Lake Erie plunged over the Falls. Except for a little undermining and weathering, nothing much has changed here since the debris was cleared out by the River and the old cut deepened.

New opportunities should be added for visitors to see the rapids up close. The rich geology exposed along both faces of the Gorge can be read as a giant textbook of the physical processes that shaped the area. Here is a contained primal world of water and rock with unlimited opportunities for interpretation and memorable experiences.



**Visitors exploring Niagara's Whirlpool Rapids.**



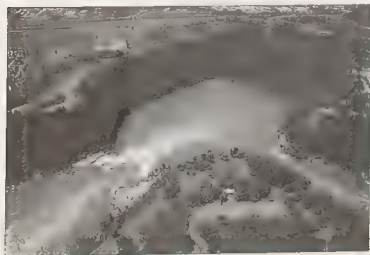
**The dramatic geological textbook of the Whirlpool Rapids Gorge.**

### N. The Whirlpool

The Whirlpool, mysterious and powerful, developed when the erosive power of the post-glacial Niagara River encountered the sands and gravels filling the buried St. David's Gorge. Since the Ice Age deposits in the buried gorge were less resistant to erosion, a rapid widening of the Niagara River Gorge occurred here resulting in this major eddy in the river flow

Buried plant fragments in St. David's Gorge are 22,800 years old, suggesting that it could have been cut during the last glaciation, or possibly during the interglacial period that preceded it. The last glaciation consisted of an early phase of ice advance, a major retreat between 40,000 and 20,000 years ago, and a final advancement. It is possible, therefore, that St. David's Gorge could have been eroded (or partly re-excavated and filled) during the middle of the last Ice Age, then finally buried before the glacier retreated for the last time.

Fossils from this site provide fascinating evidence of the mighty beasts that once roamed Niagara, including mastodons and dire wolves. Palaeontological and geological interpretation should be provided here, as well as opportunities for closer viewing of the raw power of the Whirlpool.



### O. Niagara Glen

Niagara Glen consists of a series of terraces that were once floors of the River. They show that until the Falls had reached this point, nearly five kilometres from the mouth of the Gorge at the Escarpment, there were two cataracts, one in front of the other, each 40 metres high. The second one, which had been gaining on the first, united with it at Niagara Glen. This single new cataract would have been an awesome sight: 91 metres high, almost twice the height of the current Falls. A third cataract eroded an even deeper canyon from the Escarpment. By the time they reached the Whirlpool, they had joined to make one Niagara Falls

As Niagara Falls retreated, it was divided again into two Falls by a small island. The much-larger eastern Falls eroded more rapidly, eventually capturing the headwaters of the western Falls. Niagara Glen represents the remains of these abandoned Falls.

That small island has since eroded away. All that is left is the flat riverbed and the crest of the old western Falls. The riverbed is called Wintergreen Flats. Below it, at River level, is Foster's Flats, where giant talus blocks from the abandoned Falls have accumulated on a bench of Whirlpool Sandstone

The River reaches its narrowest point here, 76 metres wide. The encounter with the mighty Niagara is extraordinary as visitors walk on layers of time locked in the rocks. The dense canopy of mature trees and the remarkable understorey of ferns and mosses together with the massive talus blocks create a quieting, reflective mood for the visitor, who is physically insignificant in this place of giants.



The Niagara Glen River edge.

#### **P. Whirlpool Golf Course**

This championship 6253-metre, 18-hole public golf course has been operated by The Niagara Parks Commission since 1951. In the stone Clubhouse, there is a fine dining room and a "19th hole." Across the road from the Clubhouse and from Thompson Point there are excellent views upriver of the Whirlpool Rapids.

A comprehensive strategy is needed to significantly upgrade the landscaping, using plants that will thrive in the difficult growing conditions found here



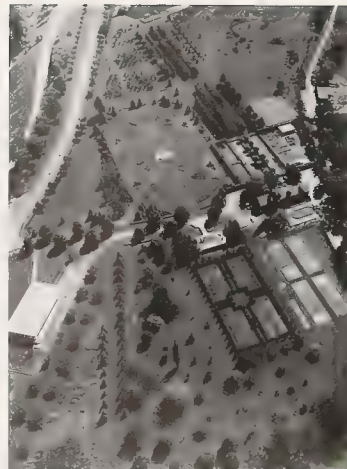
**The Whirlpool Golf Course.**

#### **Q. The School of Horticulture**

Established in 1936 on 40 hectares of land next to the Gorge, the Niagara Parks School of Horticulture is the only school for apprentice horticulturists in North America. From a total enrollment of 36, it graduates 12 students each year.

The School has an attractive stone student residence known as The Bothy. East of it is a building housing a modern lecture hall, administration offices, a library and recreational facilities. The School grounds are planted with tulips, roses, irises, peonies, summer bedding plants, perennials, hardy chrysanthemums, lilacs and flowering cherries in spectacular displays. Over half a million visitors tour the School and its grounds annually.

The School faces the challenge of balancing its two purposes. On one hand, it needs to continue to grow and have relevance as a working educational institution. On the other, it must continue to develop its gardens, grounds and collections, maintaining its appeal as a tourist attraction.



**The School of Horticulture gardens and grounds.**



#### **R. Queenston Heights Park**

In some respects, the development of the Park at Queenston Heights has paralleled that of Queen Victoria Park. Each is a recreational park, expressive of its locality. Both have visitor facilities, restaurants, pavilions and shelters. Queen Victoria Park has the unrivaled setting of the Falls, but Queenston Heights Park commands unsurpassed vistas of the lower River and the Niagara plain.

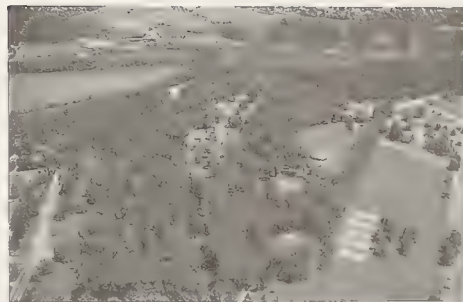
Standing on the Niagara Escarpment some 100 metres above the surrounding countryside, a magnificent panorama of River, orchards, vineyards and tilled fields unfolds to Lake Ontario.

Queenston Heights is a carefree, happy playground. Popular as both a family and group picnic site since the days of the Toronto lake steamers and the Niagara Park and River Electric Railway, it plays host to thousands of visitors each week during the summer.

It is appropriate that this place of celebration is also the birthplace of the Falls. The Niagara Escarpment ties the geological and human history together at this site. That weathered edge of an ancient sea-bottom marks the beginning of the 12,000 year relationship between the Falls and

human activity. Here, the young Niagara River, flowing as a broad stream swollen with glacial meltwaters, cascaded eleven metres over the Escarpment into an early Lake Ontario.

The Niagara Parks Commission has already created many people-oriented activities here. In addition to the Niagara River Recreation Trail, further active use should be encouraged through the provision of outdoor recreation areas. The rich human and natural history awaits animation and interpretation for visitors to enjoy and explore.



**Queenston Heights Park, the birthplace of the Falls at the Niagara Escarpment.**

### S. Queenston

Originally called West Landing, Queenston first came into prominence in the late 1700s as the northern end of the West Portage. The landing acquired the name "Queen's Town" when Governor Simcoe's regiment, The Queen's Own Rangers, was stationed here in the 1790s.

At the beginning of the 19th Century, it was a thriving port, where goods destined for the Upper Lakes were loaded on oxen and horse-drawn wagons, then hauled up the steep bank of the Niagara Escarpment and along the Portage Road to Chippawa for reloading in sailing ships.



Lake steamers like the *Corona* carried visitors to the Queenston dock from Toronto in the 1890s.

Before dawn, on the cold, windy morning of October 13, 1812, American troops crossed the Niagara River and made a surprise landing here. Although they outnumbered the British defenders, they were not able to break through the front defences at the village. Many of the Americans were killed or wounded and the rest remained pinned among the wharves or below the Riverbank.

Shortly after daybreak, a company of resourceful Americans led by Captain Wool found their way along the riverbank and up the Escarpment to the top of the Heights. At the Redan battery, halfway down the slope, was an 18-pound cannon. Wool and his soldiers overran the battery, giving them the ability to fire on the town.

The British commander, Major-General Isaac Brock, immediately organized a counterattack. Brock was killed leading a failed first charge. His remaining soldiers tried again, also to no avail. But later in the day, the British troops gained the Heights, suddenly appearing behind the Americans, trapping them against the Gorge edge. Outnumbered and outmaneuvered, the U.S. force surrendered after a short skirmish.

For almost 100 years, lake boats were the principal way to visit the Heights. In 1842, the steamboat *Chief Justice Robinson* began daily trips between Toronto, Niagara and Queenston. At Queenston, connections were made with the Erie and Ontario Railway, the first railroad in Upper Canada. With cars pulled by horses over wooden rails, it began operating in 1838-39 and was completed in 1841.



The Village of Queenston.

Until the dawn of the steam railroad, Queenston was an important dock for the lake steamers that sailed from Hamilton, Toronto, Kingston and American ports on Lake Ontario. In 1854, the Erie and Ontario Railway was converted to steam and the tracks extended to Niagara, now Niagara-on-the-Lake, bypassing Queenston. During the next 60 years, millions of people crossed Lake Ontario aboard the "Toronto boats" on their way to Queenston Heights and Queen Victoria Park.

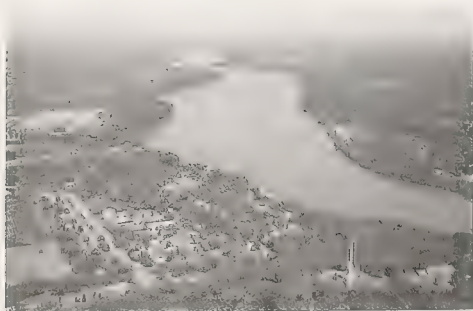
The historical events that took place here deserve commemoration, interpretation and animation.



#### **T. The North Boulevard of the Niagara Parkway**

As one of the oldest roads in Upper Canada, the Niagara Parkway between Queenston and Niagara-on-the-Lake echoes with history. In 1798, the Province's first stagecoach route opened between Newark (now Niagara-on-the-Lake) and Chippawa.

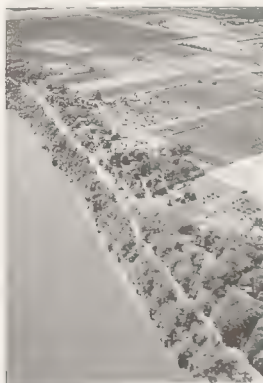
This road was strategic during the War of 1812, connecting Fort George, the main military post on the frontier, with other outposts at Chippawa and Fort Erie. A military camp was located at Brown's Point, midway between Queenston and Fort George.



**An aerial view of the historic North Boulevard along the Niagara River from Queenston Heights Park to Lake Ontario.**

With the increased use of automobiles in the 1920s, Niagara-on-the-Lake citizens asked the Queen Victoria Niagara Falls Park Commission to improve the road along the River from Queenston. By 1927, enough land was available and construction began. The new road was completed during the same year, except for a short stretch that was to cross the Military Reserve near Fort George. It was 1931 before the Dominion Government gave a right-of-way across the Military Reserve and the last link of the Boulevard was completed, forming a continuous road from Lake Erie to Lake Ontario.

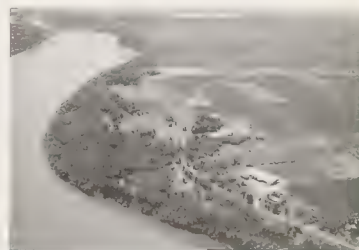
Picnickers can choose from several parkettes located along the Parkway and riverbank. On fine summer Sundays, the riverbank along the Parkway is crowded with those enjoying the weather and the view of the Lower Niagara River.



**The North Boulevard is an exceptional combination of natural and cultural landscapes.**

#### **U. Brown's Point Park**

This thickly treed river terrace was the location of a British militia encampment and battery during the War of 1812. It is also a significant wildlife habitat, providing many opportunities for nature study and quiet relaxation, as well as spectacular views of the River. Both its history and its natural habitats invite on-site interpretation.



#### V. McFarland Point Park

John McFarland built a red-brick, Georgian-style house here in 1800 on land granted to him by the Crown. During the War of 1812, a British battery was positioned behind the house. From the foot of the ravine north of the house a force under Colonel John Murray, consisting of detachments of the 100th and 41st Regiments, Royal Scots, Royal Artillery and Canadian Militia, embarked in *bateaux* for a point above Youngstown, New York. They attacked Fort Niagara, killing or capturing all members of its American garrison. The house was also used as a hospital during the war, first by the British, then by the Americans.



McFarland House.



Recognizing the historic importance of this property, The Niagara Parks Commission restored the house to its original state and made the spacious land adjoining it into a picnic ground.

The Park is divided by a deep ravine which is spanned by a substantial timber bridge. McFarland Point Park is a popular weekend picnic spot and, on a sunny summer Sunday, it is crowded with people having fun in the out-of-doors.

The Commission should commemorate and interpret the rich history of the site and develop historical gardens and plantings here.

#### W. Fort George

Fort George and Navy Hall have been intimate partners in the defence of Niagara. The original Navy Hall was a complex of buildings at the River edge used as residences, storehouses and offices for the military and civilian personnel posted here. In 1796, when the British moved from Fort Niagara to Fort George, additional structures were added on high ground above Navy Hall, including block-houses, a guardhouse, a powder magazine and service buildings. In 1799, a defence work called Fort George, consisting of a ditch, picketing, bastions and artillery mounted in embrasures, was erected around the new buildings.

The association between Fort George and the riverfront remained strong. Food and military equipment were usually unloaded at the wharf, stored at Navy Hall and delivered periodically to the Fort. In 1810, a road bisected the area between the fort and the waterfront. During the War of 1812, the Navy Hall complex was destroyed by enemy cannon fire.

After the war, the British moved the residences and storehouses back from the River and thus out of reach of artillery. Butler's Barracks became the main military compound at Niagara, although Fort George, a rebuilt Navy Hall and Fort Mississauga (which overlooked Lake Ontario at the north end of Niagara-on-the-Lake) continued to be used.



Today, the Parks division of Environment Canada operates interpretive and park development programs here. Recent archaeological research has verified the existence of wharves and docks. Additionally, two ships were built during the early years of Fort George, the *Snow Mohawk* (1759–1760) and the sloop *Charity* (1770). The old docks and boats could be rebuilt, providing a new, historically significant attraction. Although Fort George lies outside of lands of the Commission, it is adjacent to the North Boulevard of the Niagara Parkway, and the long, mutually complementary relationship with Parks Canada suggests strong future opportunities.



**Historic Fort George.**

## **X. Non-Contiguous Sites**

The following four sites are outside of the Lake-to-Lake corridor of Ontario's Niagara Parks.

### ***Battlefield House***

Battlefield House stands on the site of the Battle of Stoney Creek, which took place on June 6, 1813. Two thousand U.S. soldiers had arrived here the day before, thinking that this farm would be an easily defended stronghold. The British, who had discovered the password to get by the American sentries, launched a nighttime sneak attack. Although the surprise was somewhat dulled by the fact that the Americans had already moved to higher ground, the British captured or killed 168 Americans and took both U.S. generals prisoner. Before noon, the remaining Americans retreated toward Fort George.

At the time of this skirmish, Battlefield House belonged to the Gage family, who treated the injuries of both sides and helped bury the dead. Under the Commission's stewardship since 1962, Battlefield House has been restored to the way it looked in the 1830s and is open for visitors.

### ***Charles Daley Park***

Built on 15.8 hectares of poor farmland purchased by the Commission between 1960 and 1974, Charles Daley Park is located just west of St. Catharines on the shore of Lake Ontario between Fifteen and Sixteen Mile Creeks. With almost 800 metres of sandy beach, it's a beautiful park with an impressive view of the distant Toronto skyline.

Facilities include a 500-car parking lot, a twelve-site overnight camping facility, washrooms and a refreshment stand. The park is named for a previous chairman of The Niagara Parks Commission.

### ***Drummond Hill Cemetery and Lundy's Lane Battlefield***

British General Phineas Riall set up artillery here on July 25, 1814, three weeks after his forces had been defeated at Chippawa. On the following day, during an inconclusive nighttime battle, 880 British and 860 U.S. casualties were sustained before the Americans retreated. In 1895, the Government of Canada erected a memorial obelisk on this site. Each year, the Lundy's Lane Historical Society holds a memorial service here.

The 1.6-hectare Drummond Hill Cemetery contains the bodies of many of the soldiers from the War of 1812 and is the resting place of Laura Secord. In 1909, the cemetery passed into the hands of The Queen Victoria Niagara Falls Park Commission.

### ***Butler's Burying Ground***

The Niagara Parks Commission's first acquisition in the Niagara-on-the-Lake area was Butler's Burying Ground, the family plot of Colonel John Butler who had lead the Butler's Rangers. Although looted and neglected when acquired, the Commission restored this site. Since 1979, it has been leased to Parks Canada.



Niagara attracts 11 million visitors each year. Although this figure implies that Niagara has a commanding position in world tourism, a series of less impressive numbers go along with it. Seventy percent of visitors stay one day or less. The average visitor spends only half as much in Niagara as at other destinations in Ontario. And only one-quarter as many visitors come to Niagara in winter as summer.

Niagara does not receive economic benefits commensurate with the volume of tourists. Most visitors stop just long enough to see the Falls, then drive off to more varied destinations – taking the benefits of their patronage with them.

It's deceptively simple to think that the profile of the visitor to Niagara is someone who wants to see the Falls. Today's travellers are multi-faceted. They can no longer be thought of as one homogeneous group. Rather, the visitor comes in a variety of types, each looking for something different. Many are actively involved in improving the quality of their lives by learning new skills, pursuing hobbies and personal interests, or otherwise exercising their creative instincts. Leisure pursuits are steadily becoming an important lifestyle component, especially for the young and the retired.

The individual market segments discussed below are already coming to Niagara. Meet their individual needs by providing the kind of varied,

unique vacation destination they desire and they will respond with lengthier stays and generate greater benefits for the Commission, the Region, the Province and Canada.

#### The Market Segments

**Baby Boomers** represent over one-quarter of the North American population. Better educated than any previous generation, they are a major force in tourism markets. Now between 28 and 47, the Boomers will be in their prime earning years for the next two or three decades. They've got the energy for hiking and biking, but they want something that will stimulate their minds as well. Museums and interpretive sites appeal to them. The young-professionals market is an important sub-group: they use consumerism as an expression of their lifestyle, buying quality souvenirs and eating in fine restaurants.

**The New Singles** – those choosing to live without a mate – are becoming more common. Without the economic burden of raising a family, they are affluent, looking for exciting things to see and do. They also enjoy meeting people in a social atmosphere. Singles have a strong interest in leisure, travel, entertainment, music and dining out.

**Working Women** are becoming a significant independent buying power. Well-educated, they are a major force in deciding where they and their families will go on vacation.

**Two-Career Families** have more discretionary income but less flexibility in their vacation time, resulting in frequent, shorter vacations. They don't mind going to the same place repeatedly, as long as there is something different to do each time. Niagara could benefit from this trend since it is easily accessible from major affluent cities in Canada and the United States.

**Travelling Families** want their vacations to be educational for their children. They are eager for stimulating learning experiences that comprise imaginative portrayals of science, technology, history and nature in entertaining, fun settings. Although this is the age of affluence, most families travel on a budget, so they are attracted by quality food and accommodation at modest prices.

**Seniors** are becoming a major force in our economy as lifespans increase and the average age rises. Nearly half of current Parks visitors are over 40. As the Baby Boomers retire between 2010 and 2030, the dominant consumer strength will shift to senior citizens. They are richer, more active and more demanding than ever before. Still, they prefer to avoid the crowds of younger people, meaning that they have a particular interest in off-season and bus-tour travel.

*Widows and Widowers* are interested in packages and bus tours with a mildly adventurous twist. Like the New Singles, they want an environment conducive to interacting socially.

*Americans*, not Canadians, are the single largest group of current visitors to Niagara, accounting for 44% of all visits. This represents 19% of the U.S. tourist market in Ontario. Thirty-four million Americans visited Canada in 1986, compared with two million from all other countries. Federal research indicates that Canada is the ideal vacation for most Americans. They want to experience a different culture and way of life without travelling too far or forsaking the comforts of home.

*Other Foreign Visitors* make up six percent of Niagara visitors – just one percent less than the number of Canadians who come to Niagara from outside of Ontario. Well-known internationally, the Falls attract 48% of those visiting the Province from overseas. Canada's population is projected to peak about 2026 and then begin to decline. This

suggests that travellers from abroad, especially the increasingly significant Pacific Rim, will become more important. Meeting their special needs and expectations for quality will be a significant challenge.

*Convention Delegates* will flock to Niagara as its range of experiences increases, assuming that appropriate conference facilities are provided.

*Local Residents*, a significant same-day market, have the right to expect a constantly changing source of entertainment and enlightenment in their home town.

All these groups already come to Niagara. The fact that they don't stay very long is evidence that they're not finding what they're looking for. In particular:

- There are not enough quality things to do and see,
- Existing facilities do not measure up to contemporary standards;
- Visitors receive little or no orientation or information about attractions nearby and in the Region,
- Traffic and parking are so inconvenient that many people decide it's just not worth the bother; and
- The Niagara tourism industry is perceived to market its resources at prices above the quality level.

The Commission, the City of Niagara Falls, the Region, the Province, the Federal Government and the private tourism operators have invested only modest amounts of money into developing fresh and imaginative new attractions and visitor facilities. In particular, the Ontario and Federal Governments have put less into this most significant entry point than they have into others of less strategic importance.

Recognizing market segmentation not only pinpoints opportunities, it also affects how products are designed and planned. With the intense competition generated by other tourist destinations worldwide, products must precisely meet the needs of targeted consumers. Such a strategy, soundly based on visitor markets, will help Niagara regain a prominent position in the tourism industry and extend benefits throughout the Region, the Province and Canada.

No organization is better suited to take a leadership role in creating the new Niagara than The Parks Commission itself. Its long-term strategy should be to develop its resources into new experiences and amenities.

### **The Economic Benefits from the Niagara Parks Commission**

The Niagara Parks Commission already makes significant annual contributions to the economies of the area and the Province through direct and indirect results of serving its visitors, including:

- Direct purchases worth about \$18 million in Ontario goods and services,
- 250 full-time and 1,300 seasonal jobs, accounting for \$15 million in payrolls;
- Indirect expenditures, amounting to an additional 35 cents for every dollar spent directly, and
- \$18 million in retail sales tax remitted by The Commission to the Province and \$566,000 to Niagara Falls, Fort Erie and Niagara-on-the-Lake as grants in lieu of taxes

With its strong ability to attract visitors, the Commission is centrally placed in the Region's economy. Even greater benefits will accrue as it develops new facilities that exhibit and animate the local resources. Further, as it extends its operations year-round, local suppliers will reap the rewards of increased business.

### **The Economic Benefits to the Region, The Province and Canada**

Starting immediately with the Five-Year Action Plan outlined later in this report, The Niagara Parks Commission will be upgrading and expanding its facilities to extend visitor attraction throughout the day and into the evening. Thus, more and more visitors will be staying overnight, eating in restaurants, shopping and providing direct economic benefits to the Region. As long as local tourism operators follow through with the same kind of segmented marketing recommend for the Parks Commission, they too will benefit.

The new Niagara will offer an inviting introduction to Ontario, extending tourism into the Province. Senior levels of government will benefit from the taxes generated by increased visitor spending.

Given that economic benefits will extend well beyond the Parks, and will allow the private sector, Region, Municipalities, Ontario and Canada to achieve significant gains, the responsibility for developing these resources should not rest solely with the Commission. All those who benefit – from the most senior levels of Government on down – should participate financially in the rebuilding of Niagara. By working together, all stakeholders can achieve a level of benefits that would be unattainable separately.

Niagara Falls is one of the most important transportation gateways to Ontario and Canada. It has been the focal point for water, road and rail transportation and is the most-travelled entrance to this country. Because of its central location and the challenges presented by its difficult landforms, Niagara attracted many transportation pioneers, innovators and bold entrepreneurs.

Today, there is a diversified responsibility for transportation in Niagara. The Federal Government exercises control over the border crossings; the Province owns and maintains the freeway and highway system; the Regional Municipality of Niagara has jurisdiction over the major arterial street network; the Municipalities are responsible for all other roadways and transit; and the Commission has full transportation jurisdiction, including policing, within its lands from Fort Erie to Niagara-on-the-Lake. Inevitably, any transportation planning issue involves several jurisdictions. The process to resolve these issues is complex and will require cooperation among all involved parties.

For the 12 to 15 million people who travel through Niagara Region each year, the multiple planning jurisdictions and overlapping responsibilities are irrelevant. They expect convenience,

comfort, ease of movement and enjoyment. Inefficiency, difficulties, delays and discomfort will deter visitors stays and give Niagara a poor reputation, reducing the benefits to all stakeholders.

#### **Queen Victoria Park and Environs**

In addition to reviewing the many transportation studies for the Niagara area and data available from the Commission, aerial photographic surveys were undertaken on two of the busiest days of the year to assess visitor movement in and around Queen Victoria Park. These were the Civic Holiday and Labour Day Holiday Saturdays in 1987. We observed the deterrents to tourism described below.

#### **Traffic Problems**

Almost 90% of visitors to the Niagara area arrive by car. The rest come by bus. Since 1950, vehicular traffic through Queen Victoria Park has more than doubled. On busy summer days over 30,000 vehicles are driven through the Park.

Traffic congestion in Queen Victoria Park was reduced in 1985 when curbside parking was removed from the Niagara Parkway. Visitors now park at a new lot at Rapids View and ride The Niagara Parks Commission People Mover to the Falls. Near Table Rock and below the Treed Moraine much of the Park is given over to roadways.

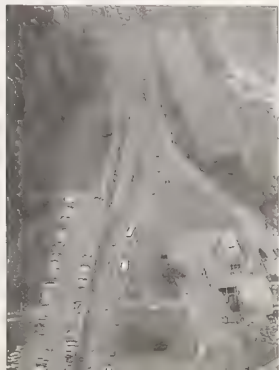
We observed three areas of traffic congestion, one of which was on Commission land. The first was along the Niagara Parkway in Queen Victoria Park, between Clifton Hill and Table Rock. This was due to the heavy traffic, drivers slowing to sight-see and vehicles queuing to enter the Commission's parking lot near the Falls

The second, and perhaps most serious because it delayed Americans trying to visit the Falls, was the extensive queuing of traffic to enter Canada at the Rainbow and Whirlpool Bridges. The Rainbow Bridge line was almost three kilometres long, and drivers were taking almost an hour to this country. Slow processing by Immigration and Customs was responsible for these delays, even though all booths were open.

The third area of congestion was on Clifton Hill, approaching Victoria Avenue. It was caused by steep grades, poor road geometry, pedestrian conflicts and street-related tourist attractions. Other streets above the Treed Moraine were surprisingly free of problems.

#### **Pedestrian Movements**

The walkways through Queen Victoria Park are inadequate for peak summer traffic. Pedestrians spill onto the roadways; grassed areas adjacent to asphalt paths are completely worn out by the constantly overflowing foot traffic; the poorly defined and unattractive pedestrian connections between the Park and the Tourist area across the Treed Moraine are tortuous especially for the elderly and handicapped.



**Traffic congestion near Table Rock  
on a peak visitor day.**



### People Mover

The People Mover system, which operates between the Rapids View Parking Area and the Rainbow Bridge, carries only 5% of the visitors to the Falls. The all-day adult ticket fare of \$1.50 does not deter ridership. More visitors would use the People Mover if it was more convenient. Increased ridership would decrease traffic through the Park. In the summer of 1987, the Commission began a link with the City of Niagara Falls transit system. It proved to be financially successful for all parties and was extended in 1988. Such a cooperative venture to link the visitor with Park and the City should be extended in the future.

### Tour Buses

Tour buses at the *Maid of the Mist* entry create a traffic-snarling eyesore. Since overall visitor convenience is a major aspect of providing a competitive destination, failure to resolve this will result in a bad reputation and fewer visitors. Integrating the tour bus and People Mover operations would provide the convenience being sought by those arriving by bus. To accomplish this, an overall strategy of adequate bus parking and call-back systems should be encouraged.

### Parking

A measure of parking activity on both the Canadian and U.S. sides of the River is shown in the accompanying chart. Marineland, with almost 30% of the Canadian-side parking, had by far the largest concentration. About 60% of the total parking capacity was occupied on the Saturdays surveyed. Since the average visit lasts less than four hours, there is a high turnover of parking, which in part accounts for the availability of spaces.

We estimate that about 12% of the spring and summer visitors to the Canadian Falls park in The Niagara Parks Commission surface lot next to Table Rock, but only 4% use the new parking facility at Rapids View. Some 60% of the parked cars on the Canadian side have American licence plates, whereas on the U.S. side of the Falls, fewer than 5% of the cars parked are Canadian.

### Regional Accessibility

The freeway and regional road networks on both sides of the Niagara River are largely free of congestion. They have the capacity to handle substantially increased traffic. Problems lie mainly in the accommodation of tourist vehicles on the bridge crossings at the brink of the Falls.

### Niagara-on-the-Lake and Fort Erie

We observed no major traffic problems on the Niagara Parkway approaching either town. Nonetheless, many residents of Niagara-on-the-Lake are concerned that their town cannot accommodate the traffic and parking created by two million annual visitors. Fort Erie residents are concerned that few of the millions of tourists entering and leaving Canada on the Peace Bridge pause in their town.



Visitor parking activity on the Canadian and U.S. sides of the Niagara River.





The world perceives Canada as a place of nature. In the future, as unspoiled environments become increasingly scarce on this overcrowded globe, our natural landscape may be Canada's most marketable resource. With cities everywhere becoming larger, denser and increasingly alike – each offering similar tourist attractions, entertainment, culture and shopping – natural experiences will be appreciated even more.

By the middle of the 21st Century, a continuous urbanized corridor may extend along Lake Ontario to the Niagara River. Ontario's Niagara Parks will be the key to achieving a balance between the landscape made by nature and the one wrought by humans. Maintaining that balance will require the preservation and enhancement of those things that are still wild. This increasing value of nature helps us frame the importance of the Parks for the next 100 years.

Niagara is many things, but above all it is water. As long as people inhabit this area, the value of water as a resource fundamental to prosperity and human-fulfillment will rise. From it stems the health not only of the River and surrounding lands, but also of the people of the region.

The quality and quantity of water in the River, the wildlife, the vegetation – indeed, the continuing health and well-being of the region as a whole – depend on the awareness, priorities and activities of the people living along this exceptional environmental corridor. Over the next 100 years, the Commission must consciously balance the needs of the natural environment, the desires of the residents and the requirements of tourism.

### A New Synthesis for the 21st Century

As The Niagara Parks Commission begins a second century of stewardship, it enters a period of change defined by the new visitor, the Global Village, technological influence on human culture and nature, doubling of the population, increasing urban density and even the ability to travel beyond the Earth itself. Throughout these changes, nature is a constant, providing focus and value for human life.

In this context, Niagara can continue to be the life-affirming symbol it has been throughout the 12,000-year relationship human beings have had with it. This essential recognition, maintained and focused through time, must be given value, clarity and action by new generations.

Underlying the long-range vision for Ontario's Niagara Parks is new *a synthesis for the 21st Century* that would strike a more appropriate balance between the technological, the cultural and – especially – the natural components. Of these three, it is Niagara's natural landscape that presents the strongest base upon which to build. The water, rocks, plants and animals are the raw material for a new age of stewardship, of human values and of experiences that will touch visitors in a way that will make them want to return.

### **An Attitude**

The foundation for the 100-Year Vision can be thought of as *an attitude*, a broadly shared common goal for achieving a new symbiosis of human culture and natural processes based on:

- *Health* Maintaining the integrity of the natural system and the people living along it,
- *Fit*: Making whole the union of human beings, nature and technology; and
- *Cooperation* Which is the commitment to achieve the common goal of health and fit, working together to achieve larger benefits, coordinating activities of mutual interest among jurisdictions and between the public and private sectors, and integrating the natural and cultural landscapes

The synthesis of the first two components, health and fit, is dynamic and will evolve over the next 100 years. The third component, cooperation, will make that synthesis possible.

### **An Innovative Role**

In this new synthesis, The Niagara Parks Commission has an innovative and catalytic role to play, bringing forward a new continuum of landscapes along the Niagara River. This role is critical, providing a coordinating overview between overlapping jurisdictions. By integrating and synthesizing, the Commission will be the key to creating a unified whole that can become more than the sum of its parts.

The Commission's role relates directly to the attitude embodying health, fit and cooperation and to the broad range of opportunities that can be gained from creating a new synthesis of landscapes. Specifically, these opportunities relate to:

- Bringing forward the historical and archaeological resources of the 12,000 years of human history along the Niagara River through research, site investigation, interpretation and animation,
- Protecting, conserving and making whole the integrity of those natural environments along the River and those that extend into the Region,

- Achieving greater unity between the natural system of the River and the landscaping of the Parks and Parkway,
  - Balancing the impact of numbers of people with the need to preserve the delicate natural environment,
  - Achieving an environmental continuity from Lake Erie to Lake Ontario of green, open-space linkages extending from the River edge and Park spaces into urban, residential and rural areas;
  - Creating new complementary landscapes as components of the Hydro and industrial landscapes become obsolete; and
  - Creating a landscape of movement and transportation that provides visitors with easy access throughout the local areas and the Region
- Increasing opportunities for tourism and economic growth;
  - Supporting opportunities for regional diversification and development,
  - Creating benefits for the Province and Canada,
  - Enhancing relations on both sides of the Niagara River, and
  - Enhancing The Niagara Parks Commission as a pro-active catalyst and innovator.

To provide a framework for Ontario's Niagara Parks for the 20-Year Plan that would be more than an extension of the conventional wisdom, the Study Team explored a new synthesis of landscapes in the City and Region within which to place the development of the Parks.

The attitude of the new synthesis also extends to:

- Improving the visitor's experience,
- Encouraging discovery and education by creating learning opportunities ranging from experiences for the individual to innovative institutions;
- Enhancing the natural and Park landscapes by working with the unique elements that are native to Niagara;





The New Synthesis for the 21st Century provides far-ranging conceptual, planning and physical-development opportunities for Ontario's Niagara Parks and the surrounding lands which will benefit the City and the local residents.

When seen in the larger context of the visitor's experience, several existing landscapes suggest new uses, transcending the current limitations of jurisdictions that separate potentially related activities. When synthesized together, these generate complementary opportunities for enhancing the tourism environment.

Enhancement of opportunities for tourism in the Park should be followed through with supporting developments in the City and Region. Although examining implications beyond Ontario's Niagara Parks exceeds our mandate, if the Niagara Region

is to attract upscale and international tourism, we believe it should:

- Provide high-quality urban and pedestrian linkages extending from the Parks into the City and private sector developments,
- Extend green linkages from the River into the City;
- Create a Welland River Parkway linkage to extend a tourism corridor into the Region,
- Create a Canal as a new urban infrastructure along the Hydro transmission corridor when the generation of 25 Hz power is phased out;
- Develop Murray Hill as the Gateway to Ontario and Canada, and
- Develop a regional transportation system to serve the visitor

The Conceptual Plan shown here provides a graphic composite of the planning concepts beyond the Parks for this new synthesis.



### Urban and Pedestrian Linkages

With increased attractions in Queen Victoria Park, visitor stay lengthened and creation of nighttime activities, pedestrian movement between the Park and the City will become an important part of the visitor's encounter with Niagara. Pathways should be aligned for direct access to attractions in the Park as well as creating urban streetscapes with shopping, restaurants, hotels and entertainment facilities for movement within the privately developed tourism areas and along the connecting City streets.

The slope of the Treed Moraine would no longer be the barrier to movement that it is today. Escalators and stairs would be fitted into it at strategic locations. Generous walkways would lead the visitor through the Park to the Pedestrian Promenade along the Upper Rapids and the Gorge and onto the Falls and other attractions.

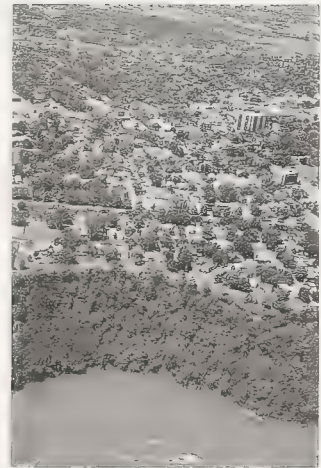
Within the City, the pedestrian streets would be lined with trees, thus extending the green of the Treed Moraine and Park into the urban setting. Special attention should be given to textured paving, a high standard of street lighting, signage, visitor information kiosks and benches. Some streets could have historical themes. Others could achieve an identity through landscaping. Most importantly, the streets should be developed with

a variety of spaces and scales and be planned to attract commercial developments along their frontages that is consistent with the expectations of international travellers.

The pedestrian streets should extend into the urban fabric of the tourism district and be linked at strategic locations with transit stops. With the cooperation of all parties, this new urban setting will appeal to the growing number of visitors being attracted to Niagara Falls.

### Green Linkages

A continuous system of green and open spaces for pedestrians, bikers, joggers and cyclists should be created within the City, establishing a strong environmental continuity between it and the Parks. These linkages would reinforce access to the River and tie the City together in a natural way with winding ribbons of green. Much of the space for these linkages already exists in the neighbourhood parks and school grounds and around institutions and Hydro transmission corridors. Developing such a system will require imagination, long-term policies and co-ordinated planning, scheduling and implementation. Some of the connections may be as straightforward as the greening of the streets and arterial roads. Others may require a planting and maintenance program to preserve the tree-lined character of old residential neighbourhoods that already contribute to the charm of River Road and Niagara Falls.



**A continuous system of green and open space linkages should be created to extend from the River into the City.**



### **The Welland River Parkway Linkage**

The banks of the Welland River present an important opportunity to link Ontario's Niagara Parks with the development along the Welland Canal. The river corridor should be developed as a new landscaped parkway and recreational drive. Currently, the river lands are under several ownerships and jurisdictions. Ontario Hydro owns both banks of the Welland from Chippawa to the Queen Elizabeth Way. Some lands along the Welland River are owned by the Region, some by the City of Niagara Falls, and some by individuals. Additionally, a continuous drive has been developed along the Welland River to the City of Welland.

This corridor, jointly developed as a regional resource with an extension of the Niagara River Recreation Trail, could play an important role in extending the benefits of increased tourism to the developing network of attractions within the Region.

### **A Canal as a New Tourism Infrastructure**

We have identified several opportunities for tourism development that bring together existing land uses in new ways. Since these explore potentials outside of the Parks, they are beyond our assignment. However, these opportunities expose new interrelationships that could have important long-term benefits for a wide range of stakeholders. They illustrate planning opportunities available to the City, the local tourism operators and the Canadian business community for the development of new tourism environments that could complement Ontario's Niagara Parks.

As the third phase of the Sir Adam Beck Hydro Generating Station is developed and the 25 Hz Hydro transmission corridor becomes obsolete, the 300-metre-wide strip of land immediately west of the existing private tourism area running continually across the City of Niagara Falls could be developed as a new kind of urban environment that would become an innovative setting for tourism development – a canal. The Canal could be created within the right-of-way of the obsolete transmission corridor, establishing a continuous linkage of water from the Welland River to the Village of Queenston. Within the City of Niagara Falls, the Canal would provide a multi-use space within which an urban and environmental framework could be created for a new kind of tourism experience: a continuum of water, trees, water falls, locks, bridges and people activity along which hotels, restaurants, shopping and a new tourism infrastructure could emerge through private invest-

ment. It would provide a high-quality image and complementary tourism experience that could be successfully marketed internationally. The Canal would be strongly connected to the Park along the east-west tourism streets, providing a continuous experience from it to the Gorge.

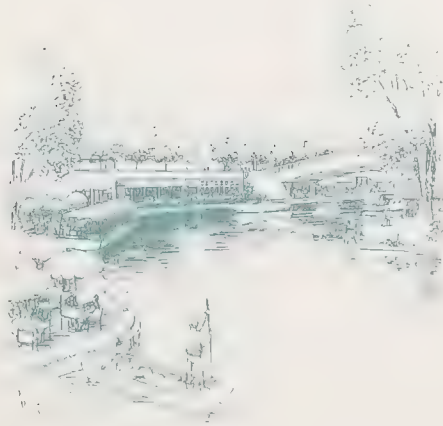
The Canal would be a setting for activity and life throughout the year. In warm weather, it would accommodate boats and become the means of water travel from Lake Ontario to Lake Erie. In winter, parts of it could be artificially frozen to provide a spectacular forum for skating and festivals. It would also relieve development pressure from the Treed Moraine and reduce the pressures for developing tall buildings along the perimeter of Queen Victoria Park.



**The Canal would provide an urban and environmental framework for a new kind of tourism experience.**

The Canal would create important development opportunities, reinforcing downtown activities by extending a focus of water to Queen Street. This new environmental framework could also become a focus for the existing downtown and provide a setting for new commercial, cultural, residential, recreational and institutional development.

Because of the opportunities presented for tourism development, the land use and transportation opportunities in the corridor defined by Stanley Avenue, Portage Road, Highway 420 and Marineland should be studied further.



**The Canal would create an image of quality and complementary tourism experiences that could be successfully marketed internationally.**

### **The Gateway to Ontario and Canada**

More people travel through Niagara than any other area in Canada, but most of them stop in the area only briefly. There is an opportunity to develop a Gateway to Ontario and Canada, a major visitor entry, with attractions and facilities in keeping with international expectations. It should provide visitor orientation and information about Niagara, the Region, the Province and Canada and be a hub for convenient parking, People Mover and Niagara Transit interchanges as well as pedestrian movement. The Gateway would unify the visitor experience, linking the City, the private tourism community, the Falls, and the Gorge, becoming a new focus for year-round activity. Without such a Gateway, the economic benefits of the high levels of visitation will continue to slip away.

The Gateway should stretch from the City to the River through the contiguous Niagara Parks Commission lands and the Murray Hill site. Ontario Hydro owns this site and is currently exploring options for it.

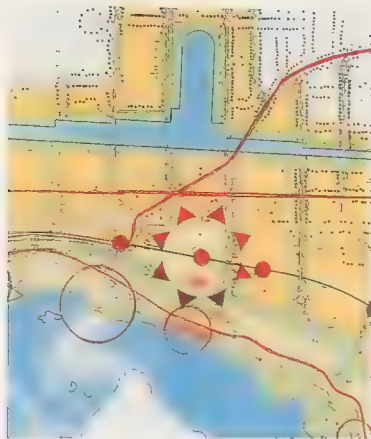
This Gateway powerfully illustrates the central, innovative and pro-active role the Commission could have in a collaborative process involving many stakeholders. It has the ability to plan and

integrate the components of the site from City side to River side. The development of the total site should be a joint venture of the Commission and Ontario Hydro with such participants as the Federal and Provincial Governments, the Regional Municipality of Niagara, the City of Niagara Falls and the Canadian business community.

The Gateway would be an attraction with the critical mass, distinctive images and contents to appeal broadly to tourists and residents alike.

The portion of the site next to the private sector developments and the City could have a supporting role establishing strong and complementary commercial ties. New multi-use, revenue-producing facilities could be developed here to take advantage of the intensity of the tourism market that would be centred at this location and to create facilities strategic to developing new markets in Niagara Falls.

The first component of this proposed revenue-producing development entails the convenient accommodation of visitor movement, parking and transportation. Provision should be made for tour bus arrival, loading and parking as well as for The Niagara Parks Commission's People Mover service. Additionally, Niagara Transit buses serving visitors in adjacent tourism areas would use this as a location for transfer and pick up. A major transit stop would be located along a transit line



**A plan detail of the Gateway to Ontario and Canada.**

developed in the Con Rail right-of-way. This would provide accessibility along the transit system for visitors from tourism locations between the Whirlpool, Downtown, Clifton Hill, Lundy's Lane, the Skylon, the Panasonic Tower and Marineland. To further consolidate this site as a point of entry, two levels of below-grade parking would be developed.

With this strong infrastructure in place, providing convenience, accessibility and ease of movement, a major revenue-producing development

establishing a complementary relationship to the surrounding hotels and other tourist attractions could be created.

This component should combine major shopping with quality entertainment, thus creating sufficient scope and attraction to be a focus for daytime and nighttime visitor activity, even in the shoulder seasons and winter.

Perhaps two levels of retail shops and restaurants could be created along a galleria-like glazed indoor street system. The businesses in this prime location would showcase the best Canada has to offer. This revenue-producing component would be international in appeal and, like Ontario, multi-cultural in flavour.

Along the streets, districts could be developed to take on individual themes and characters relating to retail and restaurants specialties. The shops and restaurants would be developed as addresses along themed streets. The streets would connect at the perimeter of the new development to the front doors of the surrounding hotels and attractions, as well as extending directly to the visitor information and interpretive component of the Gateway, Queen Victoria Park, the Falls and the Gorge.

The entertainment component would be particularly important for generating evening, winter and shoulder-season activity. Again, entertainments would be developed as identifiable addresses and districts within the indoor street system. A variety of cabarets, bars, theatres, cinemas and perhaps a large night club that could accommodate major

acts could be created. Overlying the retail and entertainment components could be a Niagara Falls festival or convention centre large enough to attract major events.

The Niagara Parks Commission has already received broad and enthusiastic support from the private tourism community and residents of the City of Niagara Falls and Region for developing the Gateway on the total Murray Hill site and extending it into the Park and Gorge. Not only would this strategic site place the overall project in the most desired pathway of visitor experiences, it would also create opportunities for neighbouring attractions and quality accommodation, providing a high level of accessibility along a transit system.

The development potentials, marketability and revenue-producing opportunities are so strong that The Niagara Parks Commission, in joint venture with Ontario Hydro, could call for proposals to build, package and market this revenue-producing component of the Gateway. This would be a project of excellence, not only creating benefits for the private tourism community, the City and Ontario Hydro but also providing ongoing revenues to the Commission so it can undertake further development of Ontario's Niagara Parks.

### Regional Transportation System to Serve the Visitor

To support Niagara's new attractions base, convenient transportation systems must be in place. Jurisdictions beyond the Commission control most of the regional transportation infrastructure.

#### Roads

We recommended that within the Niagara River corridor consideration be given to the planning, corridor protection and implementation of the following four regional road improvements.

- First, the construction of a new international crossing, preferably located south of the Canadian Falls, possibly using the existing Hydro structure which currently stretches halfway across the Niagara River. This new crossing would relieve the present congestion at the Canadian end of the Rainbow Bridge and provide a better distribution of traffic within the Niagara Parks System and the tourist area within the City. This new crossing should ultimately join directly to the Provincial highway network.
- Second, consideration be given to significant improvements of the Bridge Street crossing between downtown Niagara Falls and the U.S. border. These improvements could be undertaken as part of a restructuring program of railway operations.
- Third, a corridor be established and protected for a road link to Highway 405 to serve the Whirlpool/ downtown centre of attraction. This corridor would largely be on lands controlled by Ontario Hydro.
- Fourth, develop the Stanley Avenue/Hydro/Portage Road or other north-south transportation corridor.

### City Roads and Parking

If the City is to capture an increased tourism market, and corresponding increases in visitor stays, then vacant lands above the Treed Moraine will have to be developed for additional tourist facilities. Any surface parking which is lost should be replaced in parking structures integrated with the development projects. The improvement of the street system and the development of parking must be planned in a coordinated manner by both the public and private sectors.



Regional Road Transportation System.

### ***Regional Rail System***

Although rail passenger transportation to Niagara has been reduced to a nominal service, it would be prudent in the medium to long term to protect a railway corridor generally on the alignment of the existing CN line, which enters Niagara Falls from the north-west crossing into the United States at the Whirlpool Bridge. This corridor might be used for a high-speed train service in the long term and a commuter rail-type service, possibly forming part of an expansion of the GO Transit system, in the short term.

The existing Con Rail right-of-way is located strategically to create an Integrated People Mover System. The alignment of the right-of-way would allow a new visitor transportation system to be developed as a series of stops from Marineland to the Whirlpool.



**Regional Rail System and Integrated People Mover Transit System.**

### *Integrated People Mover System*

The Con Rail right-of-way has considerable merit for development as a linear visitor-movement corridor from Chippawa and Marineland, through the tourist core, passing Clifton Hill, and north to the downtown / Whirlpool area. Every effort should be made to secure this corridor in public ownership, and to encourage the diversion of the remaining four daily freight trains from the line. This would remove the barrier effect of the railway through the tourist area and further serve to link landscapes for easy visitor movement. This system should connect with new tourist developments, pedestrian intersections in the City, the escalators that cross the Treed Moraine into Queen Victoria Park and The Niagara Parks Commission People Mover.

Niagara Falls has a tradition of streetcars and the development of a streetcar/pedestrian mall along the Con Rail right-of-way interconnecting the tourist activity centres should be explored. Convenience and pedestrian compatibility are more important than speed and high capacity.

Assuming customs/immigration delays can be overcome, the tourists and the tourism industry may be better served if there is a continuous people mover system that operates on both sides of the Niagara River.



Pictured above is a European transit mall. A similar system could be developed along the Con Rail right-of-way to create an Integrated People Mover Transit System.



Integrated People Mover Transit System.

### ***Regional Water Transportation***

#### **• *Boat Connection Between Toronto and Niagara –***

We recommended that in the short term a feasibility study be undertaken to assess the implementation of a high-speed boat service to connect Toronto and Queenston. A vessel such as the Boeing Jetfoil could make the crossing of Lake Ontario in about 45 minutes. Such a high-speed boat link might also attract U.S. visitors whose prime destination would be Niagara, but who would find a day trip to Toronto appealing. This system would make the Niagara area within commuting distance of Toronto.

▪ *Canal* – Earlier, we suggested a Canal for pleasure craft connecting the Welland River at Chippawa and the Niagara River near Queenston. The present Welland Canal is somewhat inhospitable for small craft, and there are restrictions on the size of craft that are permitted to navigate it.

In 1985 there were 1.1 million boats of all kinds owned by Ontario residents. This boat population has been growing at a rate of about 3% per year.

Further, some 750,000 boat-nights are spent by U.S. residents at Canadian docking facilities.

The growing importance of tourism and recreation to the economy of Canada and Ontario may be the driving force to promote a pleasure boat canal connecting Lake Ontario and Lake Erie which would capitalize on the enormous natural, scenic and historic features of the Niagara River corridor.

The canal would be on an alignment connecting the Welland River, west of Marineland, and continuing generally north following the existing 25 Hz Hydro transmission corridor, through the City of Niagara Falls, passing west of the downtown, to the Whirlpool node area, onward to skirt the pumped-storage reservoir to the Beck Generating Power Station, and across the Niagara Escarpment by means of a marine railway. The canal would connect to the Niagara River between Queenston and Brown's Point Park.

The marine railway that climbs the Escarpment would not be unique to Ontario. There is a similar facility, although it overcomes less elevation difference, on the Trent Canal system as the waterway enters Georgian Bay. It was built using Canadian technology.



The 100-Year Vision is broad, sweeping and far-seeing. However, turning it into a reality requires specific, concrete steps in the immediate and near future. There are new and impressive opportunities for both the public and private sectors over the next two decades that will lay the groundwork for realizing the 100-Year Vision.

In this section, we will begin the discussion of the 20-Year Plan for Ontario's Niagara Parks by framing the tourism and broad planning strategies for the next 20 years. Then we will describe the plans for Ontario's Niagara Parks beginning with Queen Victoria Park. Finally, we examine transportation proposals for providing visitor accessibility.

## TOURISM

The challenge for The Niagara Parks Commission in the next 20 years is to establish the Parks as a sustainable, year-round, world-class destination responding to the needs of a wide range of visitors.

To achieve this, the 20-Year Plan has been developed with cohesive themes that create images of Niagara as a destination for visitors from all market segments.

The projected long-term strength of all the segments of the Baby Boom now and as it changes to increase the size and importance of the Seniors Market provide The Niagara Parks Commission

with considerable opportunity for several decades. Key over the long term will be the balance required to safeguard the natural resources for future generations combined with thematic renewal that ensures a unique and fresh experience for both first-time and repeat visitors.

The Plan has been built upon tourism development strategies that extend the strengths and capture the resources of Ontario's Niagara Parks from Lake to Lake.

The following are the strategic, market-driven initiatives of the Plan:

**1. Extending the Length of Visitor Stay.** The Falls and Queen Victoria Park will continue to attract large volumes of tourists, including many repeat visitors. The expectations of these existing visitors challenge The Niagara Parks Commission to fully serve their needs throughout the day and into the evening. The emphasis of the 20-Year Plan is on developing Queen Victoria Park to get them to stay longer, into the evening, overnight and to come during the shoulder and winter seasons.

**2. Extending the Visitor Season.** Although Niagara Falls already attracts a high proportion of its tourists in seasons other than summer, there is still significant potential to increase shoulder and off-season tourist activity. The provision in the Plan for quality attractions and support facilities will offer a continually changing range of experiences, events and programming to serve a wide variety of markets.

**3. Developing Attractions for Visitor Expectations and Needs.** The key to success will be the ability to monitor and respond to the changing needs of the market.

The existing concentration of visitors in and around Queen Victoria Park requires both increased diversity of experiences and the dispersion of visitors to other parts of the Parks and surrounding communities.

The Plan introduces new experiences and attractions to appeal to specific market groups. While significant opportunities can be developed of interest to upscale tourists, improvements in service to all market segments is the major emphasis. Emerging trends suggest that tourists will increasingly seek variety in their travel experiences. The Plan positions The Niagara Parks Commission, with its diverse resources, to capitalize on these trends by providing additional attractions, entertainment, recreation and educational experiences, based on natural and historical themes, beginning with the sites of highest visitor interest.

**4. Developing Themes.** The 20-Year Plan provides opportunities for The Niagara Parks Commission to develop cohesive themes for its resources and to be a leader in setting the tone and pace for tourism development in the Region. Major opportunities for theme development include:

- **Nature and Scenic Activities** which respond to the increasing appreciation of outdoor activities. The Plan calls for the Commission to open the Gorge and other major natural areas to further develop the Parks System with themed gardens, interpretation and programming.

- **Educational, Cultural and Historical Activities** have been programmed at locations from Lake to Lake to respond to the increasing education and sophistication of the visitor. The Plan offers an unparalleled series of learning experiences that can be provided through the natural, geological, historical (including the War of 1812) and archaeological attributes of the Parklands, and the Region's broad historical, cultural and industrial fabric (including hydroelectric development). New programming for schoolchildren has also been provided to contribute significantly toward maintaining attendance and revenues in the off-season
- **Adventure and Exploration** has also been incorporated into the Plan. Activities that add excitement have been provided for visitors of all ages in all seasons. Programming and activities along the Gorge, along the trails, at outdoor playgrounds and at archaeological and historical sites will provide the Commission with opportunities to offer new recreational experiences.
- **Entertainment Programs** developed for year-round enjoyment can also play a major role in increasing off-season visits and extending day visits into evenings. The Plan provides diverse opportunities to theme entertainment activities with the local natural and historical resources, offering unique experiences that differentiate Niagara from its competition. These can provide fresh focal points to encourage new and return visits, particularly from nearby markets. Evening entertainment and

programmed events in Queen Victoria Park will be especially important to hold summer visitors. With its high daily visitation, The Niagara Parks Commission has the opportunity to provide regularly scheduled entertainment programs, as well as less-structured entertainment programming. To be successful, a coordinated themeing of programming, perhaps in conjunction with the neighbouring Municipalities, will help create a threshold of excitement and also spread the benefits beyond the Parks

- **Quality Ancillary Services and Facilities**, including world-class accommodation, restaurants, shopping and information services, are essential. The Plan makes provision to thematically relate new visitor facilities to the attractions and to offer good value

**5. Broadening Attractions Increases the Length of Stay.** The 20-Year Plan creates a broader range of offerings with which the Commission can hold attendance throughout the day. In the short term, it is imperative that new low-capital programming, events and festivals be developed. For the long term, capital-intensive expansions and new facilities have been planned to be phased-in over time. The result will be a clustering of separate but linked attractions and support facilities that will progressively spread visitors and the benefits they bring from Lake to Lake.

**6. Renewing Themes for Long-Term Success.** To keep visitors in the Parks longer and make them want to come back, the Plan requires that a continuing program of thematic renewal be developed and

implemented. Without ongoing rejuvenation of attractions, customer attendance and expenditures will decline. A program of thematic renewal coincides with the need to stagger the introduction of new attractions over time because of economic constraints.

Successful thematic renewal does not always require extensive capital outlays. Equally important is the development of seasonal or thematic programming, including events and festivals. Complementary program development with the local and regional tourism industry will maximize market effects. Programming, facilities and attractions must satisfy particular market segments. These can be supplemented with related museum and other interpretive venues including programmed events, festivals, dramas and demonstrations. Related themed restaurants and retail outlets could offer a mixture of historical souvenirs and quality historically related merchandise.

The 20-Year Plan positions the Commission to create a sustainable, year-round, world-class destination. There is no shortage of opportunities to lengthen visitor stays, increase return visits and extend benefits to the Region, the Province and Canada. The following planning strategies provide the broad framework to guide the development of Ontario's Niagara Parks.

## PLANNING STRATEGIES

All planning strategies in the 20-Year Plan emphasize a balance between the natural environment and tourism development. Achieving this will require extending tourist attractions along the Niagara Parkway and into the Region. Dispersing visitors to alleviate overcrowding and develop untapped resources will expand the range of experiences and adventures for diverse market segments.

### *Dispersion*

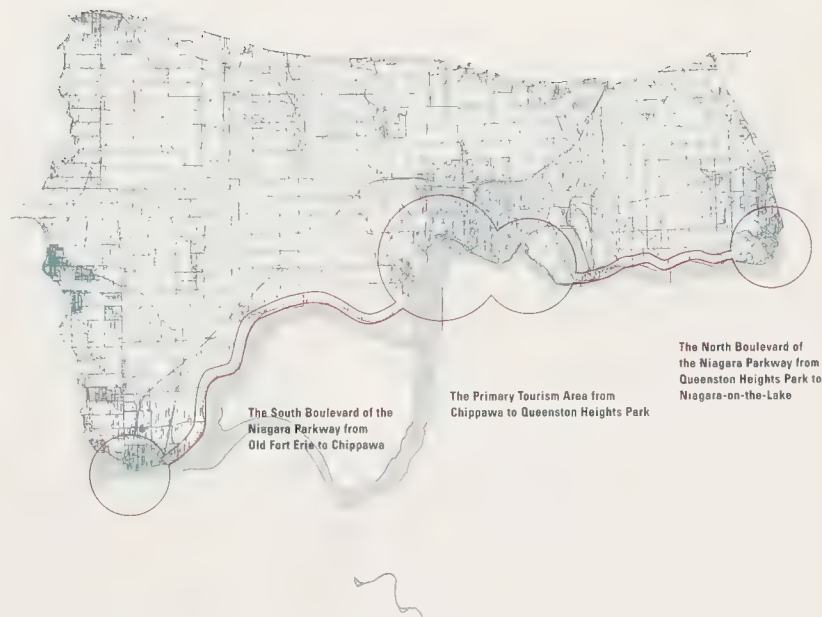
In summer, two centres of attraction will better disperse the increasing numbers of visitors throughout the Parks System.

Within Queen Victoria Park, new attractions will relieve visitor pressure next to the Falls.

The centre of attraction encompassing the Whirlpool, Niagara Glen and Queenston Heights will be developed to relieve pressure on Queen Victoria Park. It will provide greater diversity of experiences in the Primary Tourism Area from Chippawa to Queenston Heights.

Centres of attraction along the Parkway north and south of the Primary Area will help disperse tourists into the Region.

In winter, tourism would concentrate in Queen Victoria Park, especially in the attractions providing weather sheltering and indoor activities. The provision of comfortable transportation and linkages could expand visitation to other sites.



**The increasing numbers of visitors should be dispersed throughout Ontario's Niagara Parks from Lake to Lake.**

## Nodes

Along the Parkway there are sites spread in a chain that have the strength to become focal centres of activity and attraction.

Both north and south of Queen Victoria Park, these historic sites, many of which have been marked by plaques or monuments, await the visitor.

Besides these, there are many archaeological sites that require research, documentation and interpretation to complete the Niagara story.



- 1 Old Fort Erie and Woodland Culture Sites
- 2 Town of Fort Erie Riverfront and Archaeological Sites
- 3 MacKenzie's Crossing
- 4 Miller's Creek Shipyards
- 5 Navy Island Archaeological and War of 1812 Sites
- 6 Village of Chippawa
- 7 The Dufferin Islands
- 8 Queen Victoria Park
- 9 The Toronto Generating Plant
- 10 The Canadian Niagara Power Plant
- 11 The Ontario Power Generating Station
- 12 The Canadian Horseshoe Falls
- 13 The Niagara Gorge
- 14 The Whirlpool Rapids
- 15 The Whirlpool
- 16 Niagara Glen
- 17 Sir Adam Beck Generating Stations
- 18 The Queenston Quarry and Niagara Escarpment
- 19 The Battle of Queenston Heights
- 20 Laura Secord Monument
- 21 Brock's Monument
- 22 The Redan Battery
- 23 MacKenzie House and Portage Road
- 24 Village of Queenston
- 25 Brown's Point
- 26 McFarland House
- 27 Fort George and Navy Hall
- 28 Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake

Nodes of human history stretch along Ontario's Niagara Parks as a living textbook of Niagara's 12,000 years of human heritage.

### Linkages

So that Niagara will form one continuous attraction for visitors, as much attention will be given to the linkages between the sites as to the sites themselves. The resulting network will encourage tourism, extending benefits into the Region and Province.

Among the key linkages are:

- Niagara River Recreation Trail;
- Niagara Parkway recreational drive between the Falls and Niagara-on-the-Lake,
- Niagara Parkway recreational drive between the Falls and Old Fort Erie,
- Niagara Escarpment Nature Study and Hiking Trails;
- River Trips, Queenston to Niagara-on-the-Lake and Toronto,
- The Welland River Parkway;
- Highway 3 to Erie beaches and Port Colborne,
- The Welland Canal,
- Lake Ontario shoreline from Niagara-on-the-Lake to Port Dalhousie,
- Wine tours,
- Historical tours; and
- Nature study tours.



**A network of activity and tourism linkages connecting centres of interest could be developed along the Niagara Parkway and extended into the Region.**

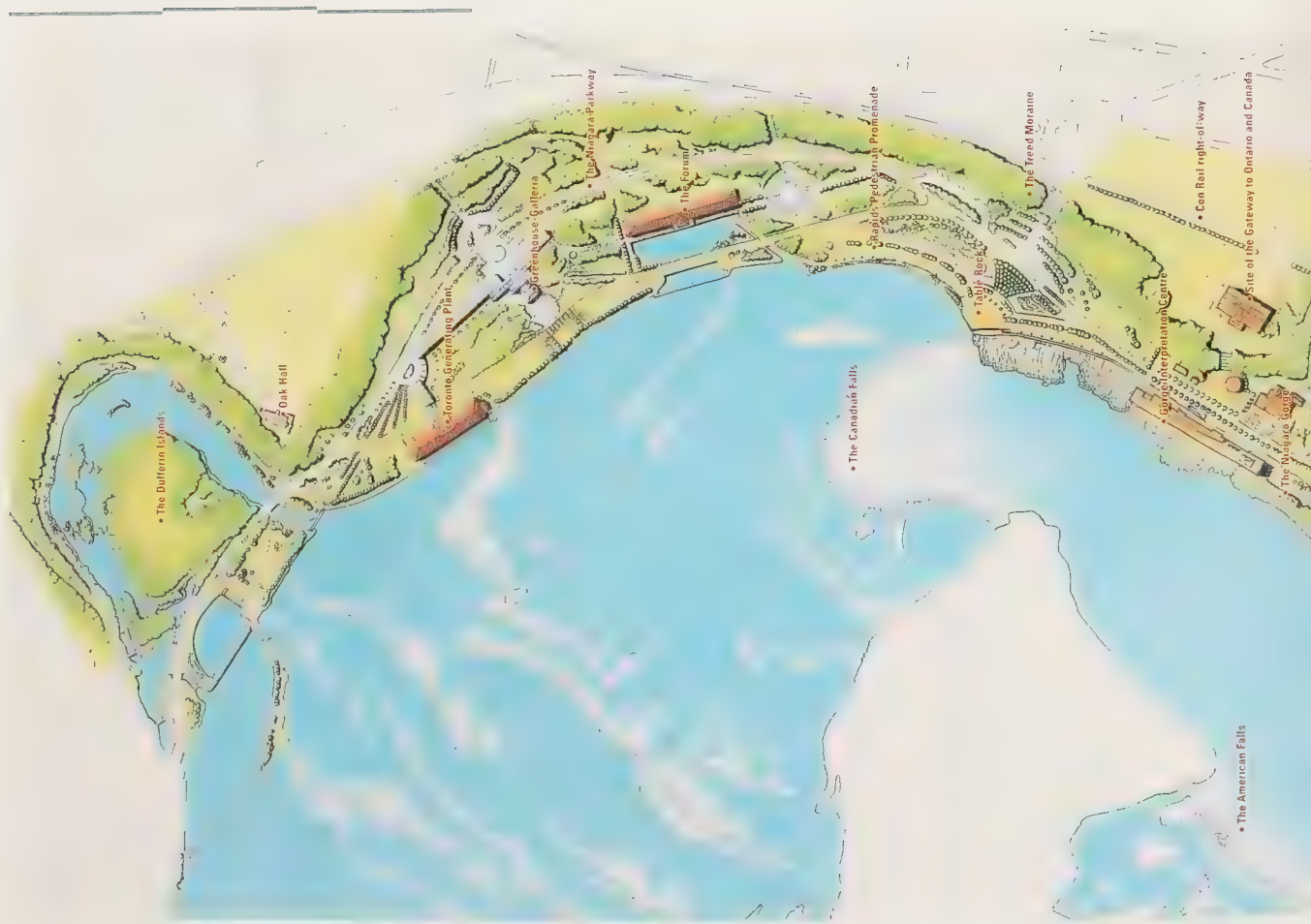
### ***Gateways***

Three Gateways to receive visitors should be established along the Parkway at Fort Erie, Niagara Falls and Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Each Gateway could become a showcase for local points of interest as well as a clearing house for tourism information about the Municipalities, the Province, the Region and The Niagara Parks Commission.

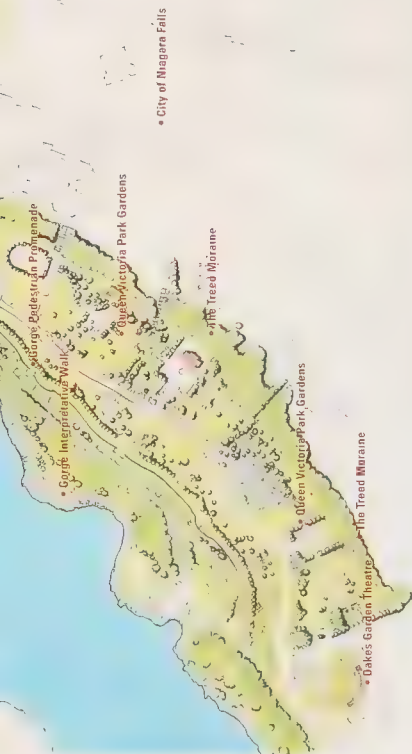
The Gateways will be attractions in their own right.





The Queen Victoria Park plan from the Dufferin Islands to Oakes Garden Theatre.





### Queen Victoria Park

The plans for the next 20 years begin with Queen Victoria Park, the area of highest visitor interest. Over half the 11-million-plus people who come to the City of Niagara Falls each year visit Queen Victoria Park. Of all Ontario's Niagara Parks, it is the greatest potential catalyst for developing new tourism connections with the private tourism community and with the City. This is an exceedingly sound base from which to begin a development strategy for the next two decades.

Queen Victoria Park is a combination of three landscapes, and it has a strong connection to a fourth. The first is the flowing water that created the Falls and carved the Gorge. The second is the Gorge, below the Park level, with great untapped potential for new tourism experiences. The third is the Park itself, extending along the River and Gorge from the Dufferin Islands in the south to the Rainbow Bridge. The fourth, related landscape is the City and the private tourism developments located on top of the Treed Moraine. The Park is joined to the City across the slope of the Moraine. This tree-covered relic of the last Ice Age physically and psychologically distances the urbanization and commercial development from the natural world. Recognizing and maintaining the integrity of these four landscapes is essential.

There are eight keys to unlocking the opportunities for Queen Victoria Park over the next 20 years:

- Creating a core area that has the critical mass of attractions and experiences to benefit not only the Commission, but the City, the Region, the Province and Canada,
- Linking the three landscapes of the River, Gorge and Park to create a more comprehensive set of cultural and natural experiences,
- Linking the fourth landscape of the City to the Parks;
- Achieving convenience and continuity of linkages and movement among the four landscapes for the visitors;
- Transforming the Park into a walking environment through phased upgrading of the existing pedestrian facilities,
- Adding more People Mover stops at the attractions,
- Providing visitor information at all People Mover stops,
- Increasing The Niagara Parks Commission attractions, building on the existing visitor strength at the Falls and extending outward both within the Gorge and along the Parkway.

We will now examine the development opportunities for Queen Victoria Park in detail, starting with the Falls / Table Rock area.

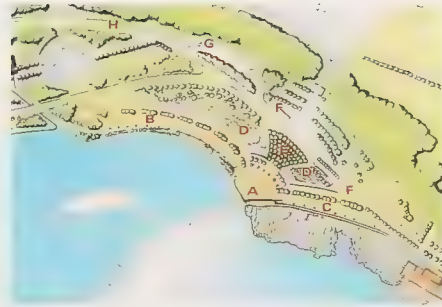
### Falls / Table Rock

As more people crowd to view the Falls, there will be a need to enlarge and widen the pedestrian spaces, to add terraces to increase the viewing sites, and eventually to redevelop the visitor facilities at Table Rock.

The 20-Year Plan shifts the Niagara Parkway west, over the present alignment of the parking lot. This provides more room for pedestrians, for picnickers and for redeveloping the Table Rock facilities. With the road moved to higher ground, the whole site will be re-graded with a gentle slope toward the Falls.

This slope will accommodate two one-floor buildings, buried except for one exposed elevation facing the Falls. These will contain new shops, restaurants, visitor services, an information centre and public washrooms. The exposed elevation will be fronted with awnings, canopies and glass. In good weather, the restaurants and snack bars will open onto patios. The roofs of these quietly urban buildings will have garden terraces overlooking the Falls that include areas for picnickers and a beer garden.

With the thunder of the cataract roaring in their ears, visitors will make their way toward the Falls along a gently-sloping paved surface under a dense grove of sycamore trees. From the Parkway, only trees, paving and planted berms will be visible. Shops and restaurants will be built on both sides of the grove.



A plan detail of the Falls / Table Rock visitor facilities.



Visitors making their way to the Falls under a grove of sycamore trees.

The outdoor pedestrian spaces will be developed to a standard in keeping with both the significance of and public expectation for a world-class attraction. Patterned with natural materials, the paving will generously accommodate large volumes of tourists. People in wheelchairs will have easy access to the brink of the Falls.

Strong groupings of trees creating visual lines will reinforce the power and elemental feeling of the Falls and help structure the environmental space. The landscape elements will heighten the visitors' anticipation and make their arrival at the Falls dramatic and memorable. Carefully chosen lighting, outdoor furniture and architectural elements such as information kiosks, outdoor

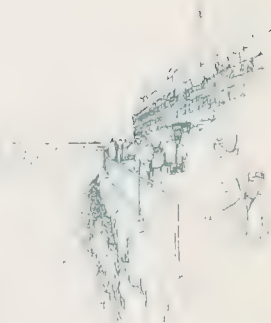
displays and signage will be used.

With ever-increasing numbers of people being attracted to the Falls, a series of new attractions should be created extending from the Falls to the Dufferin Islands along a broad Pedestrian Promenade overlooking the Upper Rapids. This series of related attractions, landscaped parks, gardens and pedestrian spaces, would create sufficient appeal to draw visitors to points of interest beyond the Falls.

We will now examine some of these potentials in Queen Victoria Park by exploring the uses for indoor and outdoor spaces of the Toronto Generating Plant, the Greenhouse, the Canadian Niagara Power Plant and the Dufferin Islands.



**The exposed elevations of the new shops, restaurants, visitor services, information centre and public washrooms fronting onto the Falls Promenade.**



**A new Falls viewing terrace.**

### The Toronto Generating Plant

In January 1903, the Queen Victoria Niagara Falls Park Commissioners approved the Toronto Generating Plant, located along the upper rapids of the Niagara River. Originally built by the Electrical Development Company, this magnificent building, designed by Edward James Lennox, was taken over in 1922 by the Provincially owned Hydro Electric Power Commission of Ontario. Until its closing in 1974, the plant provided a steady stream of 25 Hz electricity.

But its days of service hardly need to be over. Ontario Hydro proposes transforming the building into a new attraction: a Hydro Museum and Information Centre, preserving the province's first technically and historically significant generating station, as well as illustrating the past, present and future of electricity generation in Ontario.

As a major new attraction, the museum will help lengthen the visitors' stay and provide an additional year-round centre of activity. For Hydro, it

would be a dramatic showcase for its stewardship of Ontario's hydro-electric resources. For the Commission, it would provide a unique cultural and heritage attraction and a potential source of revenue. For the community, it would offer a facility that local groups could use in the shoulder seasons and in winter, as well as preserving an important aspect of local history.

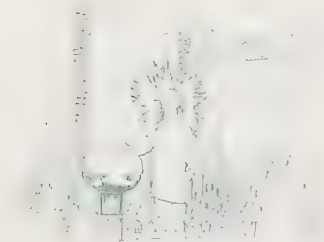
Potential themes are water power, hydro electric generation, early uses of electricity in lighting and industry and future technologies. Of course, the success of the museum as an attraction and the quality of experiences it will offer visitors will depend on the effectiveness of its ideas, contents, images, and the imaginative realization of its themes. The participation of a creative group such as the Ontario Science Centre staff could help bring forward memorable exhibits, not only in the core museum space, but also in the garden and outdoor display areas.

Besides the garden spaces planned for inside the Station, outdoor exhibit areas should be in keeping with and animate the Rapids Pedestrian Promenade. They offer intriguing possibilities for interpretation of large objects which will act as teasers, drawing people into the museum. This outdoor area should also commemorate the early industrialists in The Hollow who were the first to harness the Niagara River.



A plan detail of the Hydro Museum.

- A The Toronto Generating Plant / Hydro Museum
- B The Rapids Pedestrian Promenade Outdoor Exhibit Area
- C People Mover Stops
- D The Niagara Parkway

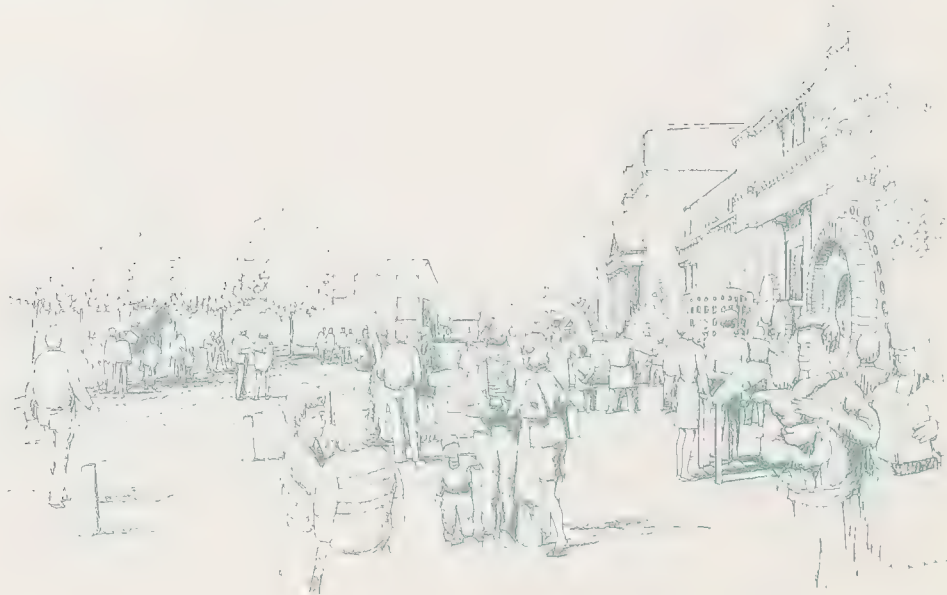


Exhibits on the theme of electricity will become the core of the museum.

Outdoor displays could be developed at the water's edge to illustrate the early water wheels, flumes and machines as working sculptural elements.

An elegant courtyard eatery might also be built in the garden area with enclosed and outdoor dining facilities. Shops could be themed on the museum contents. Both of these would enhance the visitor's experience and generate revenue for the Commission.

If realized with imaginative programs, contents and staff, the historic landmark of the Toronto Generating Station could become one of the outstanding museums of the world.



The outdoor displays of the Hydro Museum along the Rapids Pedestrian Promenade.

## The Greenhouse-Galleria

Ontario's Niagara Parks have long been famous for picturesque gardens, floral displays and special indoor conservatory exhibitions. Unlike most of the present attractions, tourists enjoy the existing Greenhouse year-round, welcoming the scent of flowers and humidity in the chill of winter, enjoying the riot of colours that heralds the spring, seeking a respite from the summer sun, or, in autumn, taking solace in the thriving greenery as everything outside turns brown.

Extending the tourist season into the spring and fall shoulders and the winter, thereby creating a sustainable year-round attraction, is a major objective of the 20-Year Plan. Thus the Greenhouse is important in realizing that goal.

The Plan calls for expanding the Greenhouse and the addition of a Galleria space to create a world-class, climate-controlled conservatory. In winter, its extensive galleries would offer an activity centre and continuous pedestrian environment from the Canadian Niagara Power Plant to the Toronto Generating Station. A large exhibit galleria would contain major floral and garden displays and shows that would be an international attraction. A concourse of themed shops and restaurants would reinforce activity both in the Galleria and in the outdoor garden spaces.



**A plan detail of the Greenhouse-Galleria.**

- A** The Greenhouse-Galleria
- B** The Garden Terraces
- C** The Rapids Pedestrian Promenade
- D** People Mover Stops
- E** The Niagara Parkway

The linear form of the Greenhouse-Galleria would complement the Rapids Pedestrian Promenade, providing the visitor with a variety of indoor and outdoor environments and activities.

The focus would remain on the outstanding interior and exterior gardens, building on The Niagara Parks Commission's tradition of excellence and the skills and expertise of the School of Horticulture. There are also opportunities for increasing the extent and variety of the gardens that surround and complement the Greenhouse-Galleria, creating new planted areas between the realigned Parkway and the foot of the Treed Moraine. Exhibit gardens are envisioned next to the Toronto Generating Plant. And we suggest a major garden between the Pedestrian Promenade and the garden terraces of the restaurants along the exhibit galleria.

The People Mover will stop at the Greenhouse-Galleria's entrances.



**The shops and restaurants will open to outdoor garden terraces.**





**The Greenhouse-Galleria interior.**



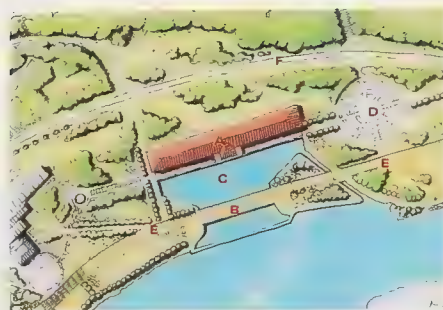
### The Forum

The Canadian Niagara Power Plant is located just south of the Falls. After 13 years of negotiating and planning, it began generating electricity on New Year's Day, 1905. This plant may go out of service around the turn of the century.

If the Commission could acquire the Canadian Niagara Power Plant, it should be developed as an active Forum, offering indoor and outdoor entertainment, themed eating places and displays.

The Plant is located along the Rapids Pedestrian Promenade. It extends as a long, low building with a prominent, tiled roof across the forebay and is fitted into the Park landscape. Significant outdoor activity spaces would be developed within a landscaped setting. Bollards, banners, colourful signs, flags and lighting could add to the forebay's excitement day and night. In winter, the forebay could be artificially frozen for skating. In summer, outdoor restaurants will tempt visitors with international delights. An outdoor performing area nestled into the land, complete with snack bars, box office and washrooms, would provide an invigorating, open-air showcase for major performances. It would be a centre of evening activity. Strong plantings of trees will provide a framework of landscape elements and visual buffering.

The cavernous interior would play host to travelling exhibits from museums and art galleries,



A plan detail of the Forum.

- A The Forum
- B The Rapids Pedestrian Promenade
- C The Forebay
- D The Outdoor Performing Area
- E People Mover Stops
- F The Niagara Parkway

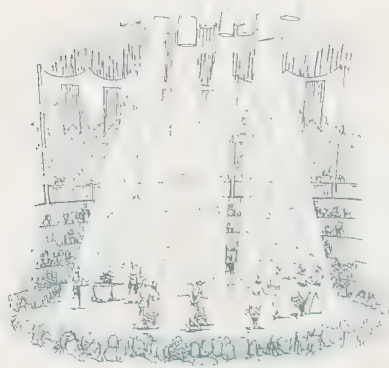


Winter activities along the Rapids Pedestrian Promenade.

or be the site of trade shows displaying Ontario's and Canada's technology. Indoor performing spaces would complement the display areas and provide a winter entertainment showcase. It would also be home to the archives and museum of The Niagara Parks Commission.

The Niagara Parks Commission Museum would look at people in the Park with a light heart: the picnickers enjoying themselves at the turn of the Century, the adventurers who walked tightropes across the Gorge, the daredevils who made it over the Falls and lived to tell about it. It would also portray the development of transportation, the

succession of boats, steamships, trolleys, trains, carriages, buggies, bridges and automobiles that have brought tourists to the Falls. Many of the exhibits could change over time to take on a succession of themes, for example, a portrait gallery of snapshots of visitors over the last 100 years or collections of Niagara Falls postcards or souvenirs. As a centre of indoor and outdoor activity and attraction, the Forum would play an important role in extending the visitor season into the spring and fall and most significantly offer within its active interior a forum for winter activity. It would become a visitor destination in its own right.



**The open-air showcase for major performances.**

### **The Dufferin Islands**

This tranquil setting of water and trees for summertime relaxing, swimming and picnicking has established the tradition of public use on which to build the plans for the future. The 20-Year Plan calls for the continued development of the Dufferin Islands as a place of outdoor activity. The first step is to eliminate private automobiles and parking from the area. This would allow the Rapids Pedestrian Promenade to be extended around the bay as a wide and pleasurable walk. Bridges from the Promenade would stretch to re-landscaped islands with informal picnic areas, seating and walkways. Additional low planting within the existing trees would enhance the lush vegetation.

Along the Promenade, exhibits would commemorate and interpret the early settlers who built the saw mills and bog iron furnaces – the first industries in Upper Canada. The unusual geological structures that underlie the rapids and channeled the River to create the Dufferin Islands bay should also be illustrated in displays along the Promenade.

With increasing numbers of visitors using the Dufferin Islands, the swimming area, change rooms, concessions and picnic areas should be redeveloped to higher standards.

### The Gateway to Ontario and Canada

As discussed earlier in A New Synthesis of Landscapes, The Niagara Parks Commission has an extraordinary opportunity to secure a strategically located site overlooking the Falls in Queen Victoria Park. On this site, it should create a new and catalytic facility that will have far-reaching implications for the visitors, the City, the Region, the Province and Canada. This one-of-a-kind site stretches from the foot of the Falls, where the Ontario Power Generating Station stands, to the promontory of land overlooking the Falls on which the Murray Hill Distribution Station is located.

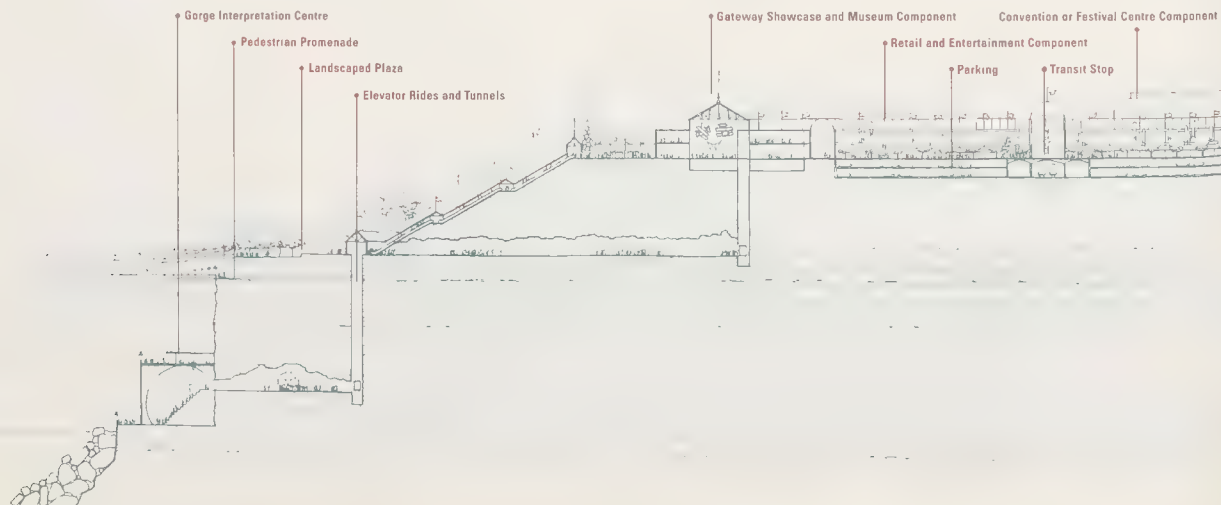
The site gathers together the four landscapes of the Gorge, the Park, the Moraine and the City into a unified experience enabling the visitor to perceptually and functionally connect the whole. It also

provides a powerful linkage in visitor activity and movement between the private tourism developments and the Park, Falls and Gorge.

Along its eastern promontory it has a commanding view of Queen Victoria Park and the Falls; its western edge is surrounded by major hotels and private tourism developments. The total site has the potential to become the Gateway to Ontario and Canada and the nation, a visitors' centre and an attraction with the critical mass, broad appeal, distinctive image and contents necessary to gain support of tourists and residents alike. The portion relating to the private tourism developments in the City has significant revenue-generating potential if planned and developed as a whole. With 11 million visitors already coming near here each year, this site presents an impressive new tourism opportunity.

One of the keys to the 20-Year Plan is the development of a component of the Gateway to receive and provide information for those coming to the Falls. This Gateway would provide a needed overview of the Parks, City and Region, arousing curiosity about other interesting destinations. It would also showcase Ontario and Canada with dramatic exhibits about its people, cities and technology, and provide information about places in and beyond Niagara. It could easily become the point-of-entry to the Falls and Queen Victoria Park, as well as the major information centre for the City and Region.

This component of the Gateway would do much more than just provide tourist information. As we saw earlier, Niagara is the result of a compelling human and natural drama that spans eons.



Section through the Gateway to Ontario and Canada from the Gorge to the City.



**The landscaped plaza along the Pedestrian Promenade.**

The Gateway would also give the visitor an overview of these events in a museum-like setting that would redefine the state-of-the-art for imaginative presentations.

Picture the attraction that could be built if other members of the Provincial family brought their creative resources to bear on this project. Nothing short of one of the world's greatest tourist sites would result from a dynamic fusion of the skills of the Art Gallery of Ontario, the Ontario Science Centre, the Royal Ontario Museum and Science North. Together, the men and women of these institutions could finally do justice to the 600-million-year saga of the region. And, after being given such a taste of the great adventure that is Niagara, what visitor could fail to want to explore the historic landscapes beyond the Falls?

The Gateway would have an important role year-round in receiving visitors. It would be especially important in the shoulder seasons and vital in attracting winter visitors. In winter, it could serve the community through programmed activities

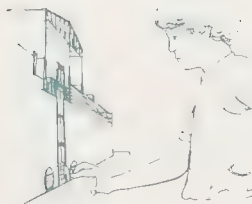
directed to segments of visitor groups as well as diverse cultural, ethnic and linguistic communities.

The Gateway would be a major point of entry to Queen Victoria Park both for pedestrians and for visitors arriving by automobile and on tour buses. From here, they would make their way along banks of stairs and escalators that traverse the slope of the Treed Moraine into a landscaped plaza. There, visitors would enjoy the displays developed as part of the plaza that interpret the geology of the Gorge. They then proceed to the Pedestrian Promenade at the edge of the Gorge.

From here, they make their way down an elevator system through 300-million-year-old rock and enter the Ontario Power Generating Station, renovated into an interpretation centre for the physical processes that have shaped the Gorge. This huge space is appropriate to portray the scale of events that formed the rocks, endured the glaciers, and gave birth to the Falls. Again, with the participation of the Province, these colossal events could be animated with computer-generated holographic imagery, object theatres and other exciting exhibits.



**The heart of the Gateway Interpretation Centre will be the exhibits.**



New visitor facilities could also be developed within the interpretation centre. Shops with distinctive merchandise and international restaurants could occupy the arches along the River elevations. They would give visitors spectacular views of the Gorge and Falls.

The Gorge Interpretation Centre would also be the southern end of Gorge Interpretative Walk

which extends along the River's edge to Queenston. The Queen Victoria Park portion of this walk would create a lower-level complement to the Pedestrian Promenade along the rim of the Gorge. Since over two million people already use the Table Rock Scenic Tunnels and the *Maid of the Mist* Incline Railway, this lower pedestrian link should be popular.

Visitors could also make their way to the Interpretive Centre's roof to see the cascade of water thundering over the Falls. This panoramic view of the Horseshoe and American Falls will offer an impressive new experience in the Gorge. Programmed light and laser displays illuminating the Falls from below the brink would create a breathtaking nighttime attraction.

### Queen Victoria Park Gardens

The landscaped space between Murray Street and Clifton Hill has always been heavily used for leisure activities, including picnics, family gatherings, concerts and ice skating. This tradition of informal public use within a natural park setting should continue through careful management of the existing mature trees and preservation of the Treed Moraine. As part of the general Park improvements for pedestrians, we recommend rebuilding the Pedestrian Promenade along the edge of the Gorge, thus providing a walkway of urban quality with distinctive natural paving, planting, signage, lighting, street furniture, viewing terraces and interpretive displays.

Pedestrian linkages to the private tourism development atop the Moraine at the Jolley Cut and midway to Clifton Hill would generously accommodate the two-way visitor movement between the adjacent developments and the Park. These linkages would extend through the Park to the Promenade as strong perpendicular movement patterns along which public activity areas and new gardens could be organized. These gardens could thematically explore the things native to Niagara. One might concentrate on the fragrances of local plants; another might showcase the interplay of water and rocks; a third could provide a visual symphony of local colours; a fourth could capture the quiet beauty of snow-capped evergreens in winter.



Falls viewing terrace on the Gorge Interpretation Centre roof.

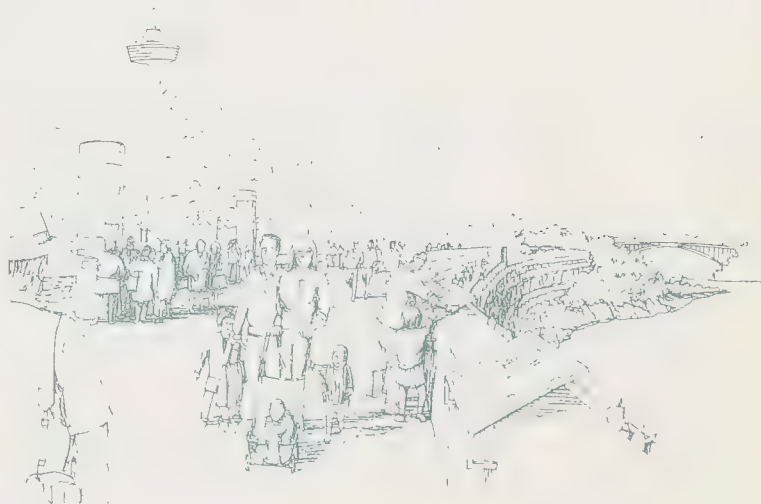


A plan detail of Queen Victoria Park Gardens.

Also, there's been a bandshell here for decades. It should be provided with additional seating and programmed to provide frequent concerts to animate peak visitor times.

The Victoria Park Restaurant, the year-round centrepiece of the Park since 1904, should be expanded with additional eating spaces, kitchen and staff areas and generous outdoor patios under trellises and canopies. Its present architectural character and charm should be maintained and it should be linked to parking and to the Gateway to Ontario and Canada.

- A Themed Gardens
- B People Mover Stops
- C Gorge Pedestrian Promenade
- D Gorge Interpretative Walk
- E Treed Meraine
- F The Niagara Parkway



The Pedestrian Promenade at the edge of the Gorge.







### Whirlpool Rapids / Whirlpool / Niagara Glen / Queenston Heights Park Node

As stated earlier, a major strategy of the 20-Year Plan is to start creating a second centre of attraction between the Whirlpool Rapids and Queenston Heights to disperse the increasing numbers of visitors throughout the Park System, thereby reducing the impact of overcrowding at Queen Victoria Park.

In any concept that disperses visitors, transportation is an important supporting component. A major feature of the creation of the Whirlpool Rapids-Queenston Heights Park Node will be the extension of the People Mover system to stops at the attractions within that node. The development of a second Niagara Parks Commission parking lot with a second People Mover terminal will also be essential.

The node of Parks consisting of the Whirlpool Rapids, Whirlpool, Niagara Glen and Queenston Heights Park presents an entirely new range of opportunities for visitor experiences and Park attractions. These opportunities arise from the magnificent Gorge created by the River. There are several powerful encounters within the Gorge – the force of the Whirlpool Rapids; the mystery of the vortex itself; the beauty of Niagara Glen; the birthplace of the Falls; and the drama of the Battle of Queenston Heights.

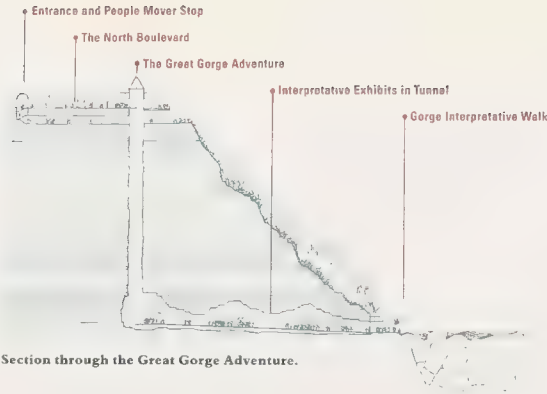
We will begin with the most dramatic section of this node: the Whirlpool Rapids.

### Whirlpool Rapids

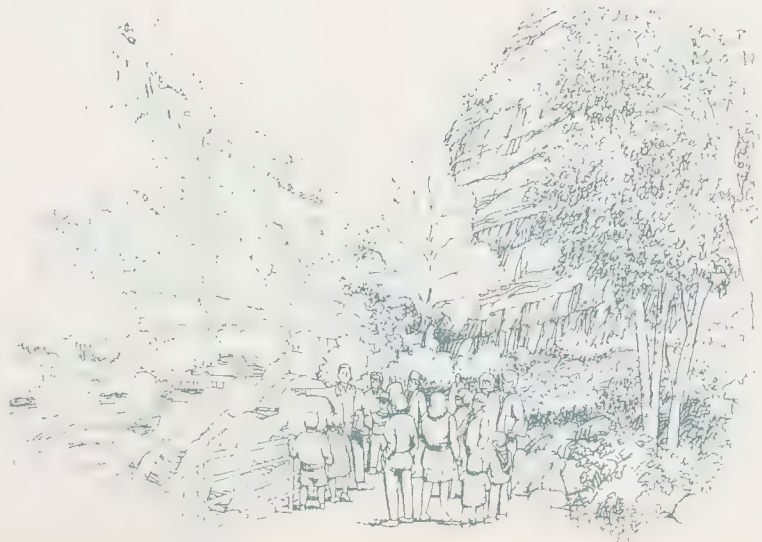
Set against the backdrop of the vertical Gorge canyon – powerfully inclined layers of sedimentary rock that lead to the Niagara Escarpment – the foaming, surging, blue-green torrent of the River through the Whirlpool Rapids creates a spectacle second only to the Falls in majesty and appeal.

The 20-Year Plan calls for significant redevelopment and upgrading of the Great Gorge Adventure. Its existing elevator through the rock and the tunnel to the Gorge should serve as a model for future visitor access, since it minimizes damage to the environment.

Designed to fit into the rocky landscape, a new reception building would welcome visitors who have arrived by People Mover to the observation deck on its roof. A staffed information kiosk, wash-rooms, a snack bar, a ticket office and a shop with quality merchandise will all be available. From here, elevators will carry tourists to a River-level interpretation and viewing platform. The Gorge Interpretative Walk, which extends along the surging River from the Gorge Interpretation Centre at the base of the Falls, will link with the viewing platform. This walk will extend along the edge of the rapids to the Whirlpool and beyond. Exhibits interpreting the geology, river dynamics and wild-life will complement the walk. Young people will act as tour guides. From the entry building to the Interpretative Walk, the revamped Great Gorge Adventure will be totally wheelchair accessible.



Section through the Great Gorge Adventure.



The Gorge Interpretative Walk along the Whirlpool Rapids.

### The Whirlpool

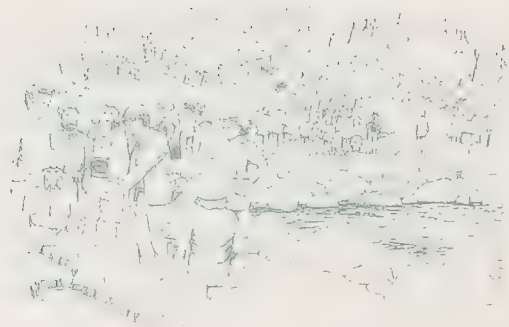
The Whirlpool is the magnificent bend in the Gorge through which the Niagara River flows on its descent to Queenston. This sculpted bowl in the triangle between Colt's, Thompson and De Veaux Points testifies in stone and gravel to the intersection of two Niagara Rivers, one of which coursed with the waters of melted glaciers 22,800 years ago, before the final advance of the last Ice Age. Although visitors now enjoy a dramatic overview of this vortex from the Spanish Aero Car, the 20-Year Plan would allow them to experience the Whirlpool directly from its banks, encountering the water, rocks, fossils and vegetation that make up this primal place.

We recommend the eventual redevelopment of the Whirlpool visitor facilities, beginning with those at Colt's Point. The existing concession buildings obscure what would otherwise be spectacular views of the Gorge and Whirlpool. At the appropriate time, they should be replaced with new shops, ticket offices and a restaurant, all fitted dramatically into the landscape at the edge of the Gorge. A second Aero Car may be needed to keep up with visitor demand. An elevator ride to a viewing platform at the narrow entrance to the Whirlpool would thrill tourists with the rush of the River and the spectacular views up and down the Gorge.

To complement the experience of the Aero Car, the Gorge Interpretative Walk should be extended around the edges of the Whirlpool to a viewing platform at Thompson Point. Side trails and displays along the walk will allow the visitor to

appreciate the Whirlpool's geology and ecology. Displays portraying the giant mammals whose fossils can be found along the gravelly shoals will help the visitors make connections to the vastly different sub-Arctic landscape that existed along the River during times of the early humans.

Early in this century, visitor facilities opposite at Thompson Point afforded views up and down the Gorge and into the Whirlpool. With increasing numbers of visitors, these should be reinstated, with the addition of a restaurant developed into the landform of the Point with both indoor and outdoor dining terraces. From these terraces, visitors could enjoy the panorama. Dining on a summer evening with the moonlight reflecting off the river vortex would be a memorable experience. Visitors could embark from here for the Aero Car or an elevator ride into the Gorge.



Exhibits along the Gorge Interpretative Walk at the Whirlpool.



Section through the Niagara Glen Interpretation Centre.

### Niagara Glen

Niagara Glen is a natural and geological wonderland. Here, 8,000 years ago, the unbroken crest of the Falls was eroding southward from its origin at Queenston. Within the broad concept of achieving a balance of tourism and protection of the irreplaceable natural environment, Niagara Glen should be opened for visitors.

As the People Mover extends northward along the Parkway to Queenston, Niagara Glen can be carefully developed as a significant point of visitor interest. A centre to dramatize the events that created this landscape should be developed and fitted into the landform above Wintergreen Flats. It should open onto the Flats with outdoor interpretation and exhibit areas. There are few places in Niagara where the geological events are so clearly portrayed and easily understood, and nowhere is the ecology richer.

From the Flats, an elevator ride would carry visitors through the rock to a viewing and interpretation platform at Crip's Eddy. This platform would also be part of the continuous interpretation walk along the River's edge. It would connect with nature trails leading visitors to the geological and natural sites in the Glen.



Interpreting the life forms fossilized in Niagara's rocks.



Interpreting the creation of Niagara Glen by the Falls.

### Whirlpool Golf Course

The original concept for this site was to create an arboretum laid out in the plan of a golf course. This was begun in 1937 with tree plantings near the Whirlpool. A decade later, construction on the greens and fairways began. The golf course was officially opened on July 2, 1951, with an enthusiastically supported international tournament.

Many changes have taken place, creating an excellent course on the shallow, dry soils that overlie the rock. The Whirlpool Golf Course is popular not just for those wishing to play a few holes but also for social gatherings. Unfortunately, though, the original intent of the arboretum was lost. The 20-Year Plan calls for the development of a comprehensive strategy to establish much higher quality landscaping, using plants that will thrive in the difficult growing conditions. Instead of planting one predominating species of tree, as is done now, the new treed landscape would have greater diversity. Introducing water to the golf course will be essential for irrigation and will prevent it from looking parched in mid-summer. New landforms with good, deep topsoil will provide growing areas for the trees.

The landscape architecture of the golf course should be unified with that of the nearby School of Horticulture, creating new landscape statements with strong relationships and visual continuity.

The interior, exterior and parking spaces of the Whirlpool Restaurant should be expanded and integrated into a comprehensive landscaping program.

### School of Horticulture

Since it opened in 1936 as the Training School for Apprentice Gardeners, the School of Horticulture has turned 40 hectares of unarable land into elegantly appointed grounds that are among the most popular tourist attractions in Ontario's Niagara Parks.

The continuation of the School's dual role – as a meaningful educational institution and favourite tourist spot – presents special challenges. Its curriculum should be expanded, not only to augment the horticultural instruction but also to provide the resources and techniques needed to protect and manage the native qualities of the Parks. Outreach programs for schoolchildren and adults should be added, as should lectures to promote interest in nature and plants. The academic and practical instruction programs should be raised to an even higher standard.

The Visitor Reception Centre should be enlarged, with a more comprehensive gift shop that has much greater emphasis on horticultural and botanical merchandise. A garden restaurant should also be created with outdoor terraces and spacious indoor dining rooms. This restaurant should be closely integrated with the overall garden layout, capturing the lines of trees and scenic vistas.

The 20-Year Plan also recommends the development of a comprehensive master plan for the School to enhance its gardens and collections, creating a well-designed, significant botanical and horticultural attraction. The fragmented vistas, views and landscape elements should be given design unity, making the visitor experience more complete.





### **Floral Clock**

The famous Floral Clock has continued to be a favourite tourist draw since it was built in 1950. Since 1977, when the Commission assumed responsibility for it, additional landscaping, parking and visitor facilities have been added. The 20-Year Plan strengthens this popular attraction and source of revenue for the Commission by creating a complementary landscape setting for the Floral Clock. Colonnades of trees will frame views of it for the approaching visitor. Additional planting of trees will screen out the surrounding Hydro transmission towers. A more intimate scale will be created appropriate for the development of additional garden spaces.

The Commission should complete its plans for enlarging the shops and restrooms and providing visitor information. Lighting to dramatize evening use during the peak season should be considered. For visitors wishing to tour the Parks by People Mover, a stop should be provided.

### **Queenston Heights Park**

At Queenston Heights, dramatic outcroppings of Niagara limestone, sandstone and shale form part of the Niagara Escarpment overlooking Lake Ontario Plain. The land, beautiful and grand, resonates with echoes of human history and the history of Niagara itself. It is where the Falls were born 12,000 years ago; the location of the Battle of Queenston Heights; and home to relics of early industrial development.

Over the last 100 years, The Niagara Parks Commission has created a people place at Queenston Heights Park, its visitor facilities and recreational activities highlighting the history and natural beauty here. It provides a strong basis on which to build. The 20-Year Plan reinforces the traditional people role of this site, adding a children's playground similar to the one at Ontario Place and further developing the picnicking and adult recreation areas.

There are important opportunities here to create outdoor activities that are adapted to the seasons. Interpretation events could be programmed jointly with Parks Canada, including recreations of the Battle of Queenston Heights. Other opportunities include interpretation trails to the birth of the Falls and adventure trails along the escarpment to the Queenston Quarry Cement Mines and Kilns.

An Interpretation Centre for the natural and human history, with visitor reception facilities, should also be developed. The Queenston Heights Restaurant should be expanded with more indoor and outdoor dining terraces.



### Village of Queenston

Before the rise of the automobile, day-trippers from Toronto came to the Falls by steamboat, entering the Parks at the picturesque Village of Queenston. Torontonians are still the Falls' biggest fans, so the Commission should work for the reinstatement of this delightful way for them to visit.

To this end, the 20-Year Plan calls for the acquisition and reinstatement of the Queenston Wharf and the creation of a People Mover stop with visitor reception and information facilities. The Wharf would also be the northern end of the interpretation walk along the River edge as well as connecting to the Niagara River Recreation Trail. Bicycle rentals at the wharf would invite visitors to tour the Niagara River Recreation Trail, thus making a boat trip to Niagara even more appealing.

A plan detail of Queenston Heights Park and the Village of Queenston.

1000 000 2000m





The North Boulevard of the Niagara Parkway plan  
from the Village of Queenston to Niagara-on-the-Lake.

### **The North Boulevard of the Niagara Parkway**

With its exceptional combination of cultural and natural landscapes, the North Boulevard of the Niagara Parkway is ideally suited for tourism. Picture an outing here: terraces created by the River, ravines and forests teeming with wildlife, strong groupings of trees and shrubs planted along the Parkway, complementary landscapes of the adjacent private properties, fruit orchards, vineyards and hedgerows.

Managing this landscape will be critical to preserving its natural charm and character. The adjacent lands should continue to be used for farming and fruit-growing. A tree management and planting program will ensure that future generations can enjoy the greenery and shade. Wildlife habitat management and parkway management programs will achieve a balance between the manicured and natural landscapes.

Developing the chain of historical and natural sites along the North Boulevard will enhance visitor activity and interest between Queenston and Niagara-on-the-Lake. Starting with the restored Mackenzie House in Queenston, we will examine the opportunities at these sites.

The William Lyon Mackenzie House reconstructed by The Niagara Parks Commission provides opportunities to create a historic centre to portray the life and times of the Village of Queenston and the Portage Road. A comprehensive development plan should be prepared, based on further archaeological investigations.

New picnic areas, nature trails and historical interpretation sites should be developed to enhance Brown's Point Park, McFarland Point Park and Paradise Grove.

The large river terrace at Brown's Point is an exceptional natural habitat and should be developed for nature study. Picnic shelters and grounds, nature trails and washrooms should be provided close to the Parkway for visitor convenience.

The restored McFarland House, famous for its role in the War of 1812, has spacious grounds and gardens, a substantial picnic shelter with a store

and washrooms, and a children's playground. On weekend afternoons in the summer picnickers crowd the park. In the late-afternoon sun, the landscaping takes on a magical quality.

Although already beautiful, the current use of the McFarland House grounds could take greater advantage of the rich history of the site. As a romantic reminder of earlier times, the Commission staff, with the School of Horticulture, should develop period plant collections, herbal gardens, vineyards and orchards to transport the visitor to the days of long ago.

Paradise Grove is an untouched stand of mature oaks overlooking the River. The Park horticulturists have been experimenting with managed natural regeneration, allowing tall grasses to grow among the trees. Picnic grounds would be placed in contained areas of Paradise Grove so that visitors could spend time in this unusual location.

### Niagara Parks Gateway North

Historic Fort George stands guard at the northern end of Ontario's Niagara Parks. It presents a unique opportunity to create a reception centre adjacent to the Park for visitors entering the Niagara Parks or exiting into Niagara Region – a gateway for visitors. It also offers exceptional possibilities for recreating at the actual site a remarkable chapter in the history of Upper Canada and the evolution of our country.

The 20-Year Plan calls for The Niagara Parks Commission, in cooperation with Parks Canada and Niagara-on-the-Lake, to breathe new life into the Fort through the dramatization and interpretation of its historical events. The battles held here could be re-enacted. The daily routine of the soldiers could be interpreted. The past of the Niagara River and Niagara-on-the-Lake could be animated anew.

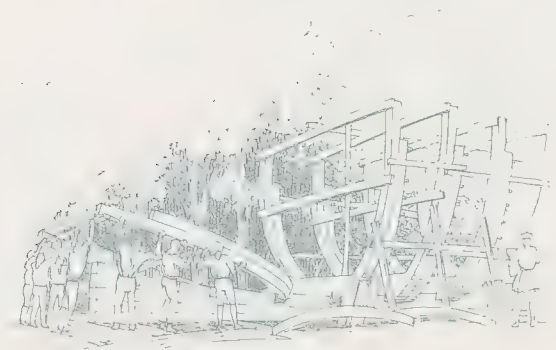
The Niagara Parks Gateway North would also be a visitor attraction in its own right, with displays, films, informational activities and animated historical themes. Besides providing a high standard of visitor facilities, the site would also be developed with ample parking for cars and buses, and a People Mover stop.

A strong structuring of landscaping will help visitors perceptually connect the tree-lined Niagara Parkway with Queen's Parade and the main street of the old town of Niagara-on-the-Lake. This would create a continuous experience that would unify the historical setting, transcending jurisdictions that are irrelevant to tourists. Landscaping along the Parkway and the River leading from Paradise Grove to Navy Hall should also be more densely planted. All landscaping around Fort George should create historical references to the period and place.

Working from this landscape context for the Parkway and Fort George, the barracks and storage structures that were there could be rebuilt, as could the extensive wharf that stood close to Navy Hall at the River's edge.

Two boats were built at Fort George, the *Snow Mohawk* (1759–1760) and the *Charity* (1770). Shipwrights, carpenters and sailmakers could work on-site, constructing a replica of the *Snow Mohawk* for the visitors' enjoyment.

The staff of the entire site would wear period clothes, acting roles and speaking in the language of the time.



Shipwrights, carpenters and sailmakers could work on-site.









The South Boulevard of the Niagara Parkway plan from King's Bridge Park to Old Fort Erie.

### **The South Boulevard of the Niagara Parkway**

This section of the Niagara Parkway that extends south along the River from Chippawa to Fort Erie has been developed and upgraded for nearly 100 years. The 20-Year Plan envisions a more active and significant role for this parkway linkage. It is an important corridor along which to extend tourism with a system of natural, historical and recreational attractions.

Before describing concepts for specific sites, two observations should be made about the landscape quality of the Parkway. In general, it is inferior to that of the North Boulevard, meaning it is less conducive to creating quality tourist experiences. Also, there is an ongoing problem with the erosion of the riverbank. In some places, it has reduced the Parkway to a narrow strip. Both of these problems can be solved, but they will require planning, ongoing maintenance and monitoring.



### **Landscaping**

One of the first components of the 20-Year Plan is the development of a new maintenance and management program for the South Boulevard, creating a more natural, indigenous and scenic landscape, particularly along the River edge and at the confluences of creeks. This should begin with an inventory of natural and wet areas along the Parkway to determine ecological sensitivity, an assessment of which sites to protect or regenerate, and the recommendations for the required management practices. Because of the wet, heavy clay soils along much of the riverbank, the Commission should analyze the varying site-specific conditions and develop strategies and implementation plans to re-landscape and upgrade the South Boulevard. Much of this plan should be based on managing and extending the unique qualities of adjacent natural areas.

Many picnic areas are close to the Parkway. Although tourists like this convenience, picnic tables and new plantings for screening between the Parkway would make them even more appealing. For some, natural planting along the edge could be selectively thinned out, permitting better views. Restrooms should be provided at major picnic areas.

The existing historical markers are uninteresting and poorly displayed. They should be better designed and supplemented with exhibits.

Special plant groupings should be allowed to regenerate along the Parkway at the points where small creeks enter the River.

Ducks, geese, swans, gulls and many other birds can be observed along the Niagara River, which lies beneath a key migratory flyway. Habitat and viewing areas should be increased.

We will now examine the plans for each area, starting with King's Bridge Park and working south to Fort Erie.

### **King's Bridge Park**

The people of the communities around King's Bridge Park use it heavily for picnicking, swimming and other outdoor activities. The 20-Year Plan would enhance this traditional use by adding a new playground, expanding the beach and swimming areas along the Welland River, increasing the picnic grounds, and adding tennis courts and a playing field.

### **Navy Island**

Thickly forested, teeming with life, and rich with historical and archaeological sites, Navy Island is a largely undisturbed microcosm of the vegetation, wildlife and early human history of southern Niagara. This irreplaceable sanctuary could become an important site for future generations, carrying the natural essence of Niagara through the next 100 years and beyond. It has the most forward-looking role of all sites covered by the long-range plan.

With extreme care, this wild reminder of Niagara's past could be developed with Provincial participation as a place of learning for Ontario's schoolchildren. The site is not without the wounds of human activity. One of these could be healed over by establishing an outdoor education centre in a field left by logging operations. This centre would be planned, designed and operated to fit with the environment, existing in harmony with the land, vegetation and wildlife.



**The outdoor classroom.**

### **Ussher's, Boyer's, Black, Baker's, Miller's and Frenchman's Creeks**

These creeks are strung like jewels along the necklace of Ontario's Niagara Parks. We cannot overemphasize their contribution to the environment and visitor experience along the South Boulevard. In the height of summer, they are a riot of wildflowers, butterflies and buzzing insects. For visitors from places where natural environments are rapidly disappearing, these creeks offer remarkable experiences and encounters with nature.

As a priority of the 20-Year Plan, these natural habitats and their related environments are to be preserved, maintained and made available for visitors to enjoy.

There is speculation that archaeological sites exist near these creeks. Investigation will be essential before any disturbance of these locations can be undertaken if irreplaceable resources are to be preserved for future generations.

### **Gonder's Flats**

Gonder's Flats is an outstanding example of the enhancement of interrelated landscape elements, combining a high-quality river edge, a natural-regeneration environment, park and picnic areas, Parkway landscaping, plantings of flourishing trees and well-landscaped private grounds. It's a model for the future regeneration of the South Boulevard for the 20-Year Plan.

In some cases, simple elimination of mowing will allow many wildflower and river-edge plant species along the South Boulevard to regenerate and spread, re-establishing the natural character of the vegetation. In other cases, where inappropriate species that inhibit growth have been introduced to the heavy clay soils, new species should be planted in strong groups.

### **Miller's Creek**

#### **Campground and Marina**

The Miller's Creek campground has been in operation since 1962. Visitors to its 54 campsites enjoy the complex of parkland, nature trails, woodlands, wetlands and adjacent marinas. Although the Commission periodically suggests new plans for development of this area, only minor upgrades have occurred so far.

In the next 20 years there will be ample visitor interest to justify bringing the Miller's Creek Campground onto a par with the best of Ontario's Provincial Parks, adding visitor facilities, new camping sites and improved landscaping with appropriate species of shade trees.

Miller's Creek should become the environmental focus of the new campground. Over the long term, the Commission should consider the consolidation and acquisition of properties as they become available to create a more unified and complete outdoor recreation area.

The Miller's Creek Shipyard would make an ideal site for a golf course, adding a new attraction for both campers and Fort Erie residents. Land and water-based recreation seems ideally suited to the South Boulevard.

To create a large contiguous park area, the Parkway should be relocated along the alignment of Cairns Crescent. Buffering landscaping and trees should be provided to reduce impacts on neighbouring residences.



**The Miller's Creek Marina redeveloped as a centre of recreation and outdoor activity.**

The public response to the Miller's Creek Marina suggests a steadily increasing demand for boating facilities. It should be expanded to accommodate at least twice as many moorings. The present facilities are unimaginative and dull. Redeveloping them will create a base for continued growth. The combined marina and golf course would appeal to the existing users and also attract a more affluent clientele. Attention should be given to building design, parking location and landscape screening, establishing a linear marina rather than one that protrudes into the River. It should all be linked together with a walking surface, landscaping and lighting, creating a node of recreation and outdoor activity.

Shops, restaurants, visitor information facilities, washrooms and a snack bar should be added to this site.

### Frenchman's Creek

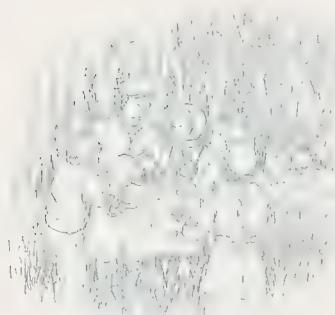
This natural area, extending along the watershed into the Region, is the most significant environment bordering the southern shore of the Niagara River. Its highest value is as a sanctuary for conservation, research and passive recreation. It should exist as regenerated and intact forest. The Niagara Parks Commission should consider acquiring the entire site, from the River's edge to the Queen Elizabeth Way. The vital watershed extending further west should be jointly protected from pollution by the Niagara Region, Town of Fort Erie and Ministry of Natural Resources.

With a secure future, Frenchman's Creek would offer visitors a new nature study park. With careful management, both the Parkway and Niagara River Recreation Trail could be looped along the south

bank of Frenchman's Creek to take visitors to an interpretation and research field centre. This centre, designed to have minimal affect on the land, should contain displays interpreting:

- The process of glaciation and the formation of melt water lake bottoms that created the landscape;
- The establishment of the Niagara River,
- The plants and animals of the Fort Erie area, and
- The human history and archaeology

It should also contain student laboratories and facilities for instructing visiting student groups and families. An inviting network of interpretation trails should lead to the nature sites.

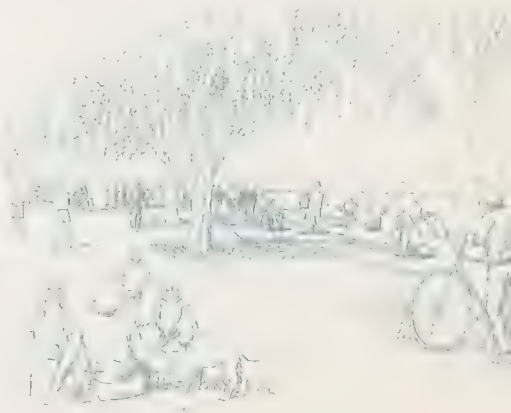


A new nature study park at Frenchman's Creek.

### Town of Fort Erie Riverfront

Challenging and rewarding opportunities exist for transforming the riverfront of Fort Erie into a people place with parks and urban regeneration. Nearly five million people cross the nearby Peace Bridge annually. This market, combined with the urban and recreational infrastructure of a Niagara Parks River-edge system, the adjacent downtown, tree-lined residential streets, natural and historic sites and the Niagara Parkway are the ingredients for change.

There are two keys to increasing visitors along the Parkway. First, the Canadian Immigration Station, the entry to Fort Erie and the Queen Elizabeth Way must all be re-designed, giving tourists both an informed choice about and easy access to the Town. Second, the parklands along the River must be improved dramatically.



The River-edge park system with the Niagara River Recreation Trail and boardwalk running continuously along the Town of Fort Erie Riverfront.

The 20-Year Plan recommends consolidating the River edge into a continuous recreational park. The beaches, picnic grounds and open recreational areas should be expanded by:

- Planting trees on both sides of the Parkway to create strong colonnades for shade and to define the character of the Parkway along the Riverfront;
- Redeveloping the Riverbank to stop erosion in a way that would be visually appropriate for a public place;
- Re-landscaping the Park areas with sod, ornamental planting and strong groups of trees,
- Developing extensive, well-designed beaches with provision for change rooms and washrooms,
- Developing a continuous boardwalk as a focus for pedestrian movement and activity throughout the Park and to complement the beach areas,
- Developing pedestrian lighting along the boardwalk and Parkway to encourage nighttime activity;
- Engaging the Town of Fort Erie and the private sector in cooperative efforts to plan and implement the river-edge people activity place, and
- Openly sharing skills and expertise to help establish green linkages of tree-lined residential streets extending from the River into the Town

#### Niagara Parks Gateway South

As mentioned earlier, substantial improvement to the Queen Elizabeth Way exits and the Canadian Immigration facility would offer the five million people passing through the region an informed choice about staying. The 20-Year Plan strongly recommends developing this important entry to the Parks, Ontario and Canada.

A new visitor facility would provide information about the impressive scope of recreational, historical, natural and tourism points of interest in Fort Erie and along the Parkway, Lake Erie beaches and the Welland Canal. It would be a gateway to Ontario and Canada for the millions of visitors entering the Province at the Peace Bridge. This new Gateway would also be an attraction in its own right, providing an overview of the natural and human history that have shaped the area.

The site of Mather Arch is ideal for this new facility. The Arch would be restored and the surrounding roadworks simplified by eliminating

the riverside loops of the Parkway around Mather Arch, thus expanding Mather Park to the Gateway.

The Gateway would be developed with outdoor exhibit and activity areas, as well as interior spaces. The Commission's tradition of landscaping and planting displays would be given new expression with welcoming bosques and colonnades of trees and ornamental planting beds. The Commission could also provide restaurants and shops for the visitors.

Mather Park will become the active outdoor extension of the Gateway. Its outdoor exhibits would commemorate the voyages of the early Great Lakes explorers and traders who made their way along these shores. An interpretation boardwalk should be created, linking the Gateway to Old Fort Erie. Mather Park should also be developed with ample parking and facilities for picnicking and outdoor playing. All planning should be coordinated with the proposed bridge expansion.



Outdoor demonstrations interpreting the use of flint by the Woodland Culture.



### Old Fort Erie

The restoration of Old Fort Erie, which began at the turn of the century, was made possible through careful research and painstaking work undertaken jointly by the Provincial and Federal governments. The Fort interprets early Canadian and Niagara history and the heroic siege of August 1814. The past is brought to life through the drilling and changing of the guard.

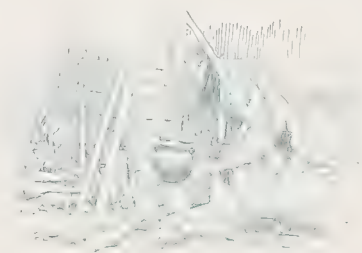
Recent archaeological finds have shown that the current history-based attractions spotlight only the tip of a human iceberg, dating back 5,000 years. The historical scope of Old Fort Erie could be expanded to encompass both early native and early European events, broadening its base of visitor attraction.

The same spirited collaboration that gave us the rebuilt Fort could be called upon to reconstruct Woodland Culture sites. Sites must be identified, protected and researched and a master plan prepared for their development. The animation of these villages to portray the construction, dress, food

preparation, ceremonies and artifacts of these early peoples could become a unique cultural treasure. If portrayed as living villages with people acting roles, they could provide rare insights. Old Fort Erie, if developed as a complex of historical sites and brought alive for the visitor, could become one of the most distinctive attractions in Ontario. Few places have the scope of historical interest and the richness of events that are to be found at the Fort site.

Shops with historical themes, snack bars and restaurants could be developed to complete the centre.

A combined visitor and interpretation centre should be developed to support this exceptional location. Conducted tours of the recreated historical sites could depart from there.



**Woodland Culture sites will be reconstructed as living villages.**

The following section of the 20-Year Plan discusses opportunities to enhance transportation within Queen Victoria Park, the Whirlpool-Queenston area, and along the Niagara Parkway to Fort George and Old Fort Erie, all within the jurisdiction of The Niagara Parks Commission. Earlier, in the section called A New Synthesis of Landscapes, transportation planning, integration opportunities and linkages at the larger scale were discussed.

## Queen Victoria Park

The progressive transformation of Queen Victoria Park into a pedestrian domain is a major tenant of the 20-Year Plan. Such an essential visitor-friendly environment will be the setting along which to extend visitors from the Falls to new centres of activity. The provisions for arriving at Niagara Falls, parking, travelling within the Park and its environs, and visiting attractions have been planned and coordinated to ensure that visitor comfort and convenience is achieved.

## Road Plan

The following are the road components of the 20-Year Plan:

- Within Queen Victoria Park, the Niagara Parkway will be reduced in width and, where physically possible, relocated away from the pedestrian ways along the edge of the Gorge, closer to the base of the Treed Moraine.
- During the peak tourist season, traffic should be managed to keep volumes to a level that can be accommodated on a two-lane roadway. In its final configuration, traffic would be restricted to one-way southbound from Murray Street to the Dufferin Islands
- During the shoulder seasons, two-way vehicular traffic would be operated on the Niagara Parkway through Queen Victoria Park to maintain a continuous scenic drive from Niagara-on-the-Lake to Old Fort Erie
- The major road system accommodating visitor traffic should appropriately be largely outside Commission lands, placing visitors at the doorstep of the private sector. In the long term, the Plan envisions a new crossing of the Niagara River, possibly on the alignment of the existing Hydro control structure. This crossing will distribute traffic more evenly through the Parks System and will improve the use of the Commission's Rapids View lot and People Mover and serve an expanded Manneland
- Traffic entering Niagara Falls from The Queen Elizabeth Way should be routed on a north-south transportation corridor. This corridor would serve as a feeder route to parking facilities above the Treed Moraine. The planning responsibility for this corridor largely rests with Ministry of Transportation, the Regional Municipality of Niagara and the City of Niagara Falls.



Road and Parking Plans to progressively transform Queen Victoria Park into a pedestrian environment.

### *Parking Plan*

An essential long-term aspect of making Queen Victoria Park a pedestrian-friendly environment is the removal of the surface parking lot at Table Rock and the rebuilding of parking as part of new private developments above the Treed Moraine. Parking will be linked to the Park by greatly improved pedestrian promenades and The Niagara Parks Commission People Mover system.

Tourists are very sensitive to high parking charges. The City, tourist industry and the Commission should consider the larger economic benefits of increased lengths of stay created by moderately priced parking.

The Plan recommends that the Rapids View parking lot remain a key parking facility. Its role will be reinforced by a new river crossing, an enhanced People Mover system and a future direct link with the transportation system to be developed in the Con Rail right-of-way. Provision of signage and information for visitors to use the Rapids View Parking Lot and People Mover systems will be essential. At present, the Commission realizes some 13% of its net income from parking facilities, principally the lot at Table Rock. The consolidation of Niagara Parks Commission parking at Rapids View and removal of parking from Table Rock must be carefully phased.

### *Pedestrian Ways*

The relocation of the Niagara Parkway within Queen Victoria Park will create opportunities for widening pedestrian walkways into promenades that will appropriately accommodate the volumes of tourist activity. The Plan proposes a Pedestrian Promenade along the Gorge and Rapids supported by frequent People Mover stops. Additional pedestrian facilities are proposed to connect between the Park and the tourist area, across the Treed Moraine. These connections should be mechanically assisted, for example glass-enclosed or canopied escalators. The location of these escalators should be carefully designed, recognizing the sensitivity of the vegetation, the long-term stability of the Moraine slopes and the landscaping proposals for the Park.

### *The Niagara Parks Commission People Mover*

The development of an integrated People Mover system within the Park and tourist area has been the subject of considerable study and debate over the last six years. Based on recent surveys, it would appear that these studies assumed overly optimistic estimates of present and future tourism demands.

As tourism increases, a more sophisticated People Mover may be required within Queen Victoria Park. Such a new system should be built in response to increased tourism rather than as a means to increase demand.

The Plan recommends that in the development of both Queen Victoria Park and the tourist area a continuous corridor be defined and protected for such a system. The corridor should *not* be selected on the basis of the system being a scenic ride through the Park. Such a system would have to be justified from both economic and convenience standpoints, and should meet stringent design and operating criteria to ensure that the aesthetic and environmental qualities of the Park are maintained.

The existing vehicles purchased in 1985 are likely to be the backbone of the People Mover

system for at least the next ten years. Their continuing function should be reviewed before the year 2000. The system should be extended beyond Queen Victoria Park to Queenston and, in the long term, to Fort George and Old Fort Erie. In the long term the Plan also foresees The Niagara Parks Commission People Mover integrated with a tourist area people mover system for transporting visitors above the Treed Moraine.

The Plan proposes that a system be established within the lower Gorge to move visitors between the Scenic Tunnels and the *Maid of the Mist* dock. This system would relieve congestion at the elevators and the incline railway by offering tourists visiting both attractions an alternative route. Such a system would pass either above or through the redeveloped Ontario Power Generating Station. The ride could be an attraction in itself, marketed as part of a total attraction/transportation package.

The Gorge has both a harsh climate and tortuous landscape. The design of the new system would have to take both of these into account and should not detract from the natural beauty of this site.

*Whirlpool Rapids/Niagara Glen/  
Queenston Heights Park Node*

This node, which might include the downtown area of Niagara Falls, should be developed as a concentration of tourist attractions that would counterbalance the dominance of Queen Victoria Park and the Falls, helping to disperse tourist activity. Except for the extension of the People Mover system and the provision of parking, the transportation enhancement of this area would largely depend on agencies outside of the Commission. This was discussed earlier in the Transportation section of *A New Synthesis of Landscapes*



The best way to enjoy the beauty of Ontario's Niagara Parks during all seasons is with a leisurely stroll.

*The Niagara Parks Gateway North*

In order for the Gateway proposal at the northern terminus of Ontario's Niagara Parks to be successful, the 20-Year Plan proposes the following transportation changes

- Traffic entering the Old Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake from the west should be diverted to the Gateway, without first travelling through the centre of town
- Vehicles for tourist movement should operate between parking facilities at the Gateway and the Old Town
- The walk between the Gateway and the town centre should be historically themed and animated. Except for the Gateway itself, all these measures are outside of the lands controlled by the Commission

*The Niagara Parks Gateway South*

For visitors crossing the Peace Bridge, the Plan envisions increased accessibility to the Town of Fort Erie and the Niagara Boulevard by additional ramp connections, signage and routing of traffic. These should be explored with the road and bridge agencies having jurisdiction in the area. Proposals have been made to widen the Peace Bridge. The Town and the Commission should use this as an opportunity to achieve the development objectives described in the Plan.

*The North and South Boulevards of the Niagara Parkway*

The Niagara Parkway outside of Queen Victoria Park should not be widened beyond the present two lanes. If vehicular traffic volumes reach a level that impairs the scenic drive and the qualities of the Park corridor, then measures to limit traffic should be considered. The Plan's short-term measures include expansion of the People Mover system between Niagara Falls and Queenston and to Niagara-on-the-Lake together with development of parking facilities designed to encourage drivers to park and ride.

5-YEAR ACTION PLAN

PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

RECOMMENDATIONS





The Action Plan that follows outlines the Commission's priorities for the first five years. It by no means exhausts all the possibilities, nor is it intended to limit options or reject unforeseen opportunities.

The Action Plan has two separate thrusts:

**I. Independent actions to be undertaken by the Commission on its own lands to:**

- Refine the details of the 20-Year Plan;
- Improve transportation and marketing; and
- Develop the Commission lands within the self-funding mandate for projects that do not require interaction with others.

**II. Interdependent cooperative actions to be undertaken by the Commission and others for:**

- Jointly developing attractions; and
- Integrating transportation, marketing and planning.

**Developing the Gateway to Ontario and Canada** is discussed at the end of this section as a separate issue.

**I. Independent Actions Undertaken by the Commission**

The independent actions to be carried out by the Commission on its own lands consist of parallel streams of activity to:

*A. Organize the Commission staff* to implement the plan;

*B. Improve the visitor experience* in Queen Victoria Park by enhancing existing physical facilities;

*C. Develop and enhance physical facilities* that will attract new visitors to Queen Victoria Park;

*D. Program activities* in the Parks;

*E. Develop marketing* focusing on Queen Victoria Park to increase working capital and ensure that visitors keep coming;

*F. Undertake detailed planning* to refine the 20-Year Plan;

*G. Improve the transportation system* for visitor convenience and comfort; and

*H. Develop a Five-Year Financial Plan* to complement the Five-Year Action Plan.

### **A. Organize the Commission Staff**

The activities on the preceding list place new demands on the Commission staff. The Five-Year Action Plan will require enhancement of the Commission's staff as a priority in the following categories:

- Marketing and promotion;
- Programming, interpretation and activity development,
- Tourism planning and packaging;
- Visitor information and hospitality development; and
- Detailed development planning.

Additional supporting expertise may be required in the areas of:

- Financial planning,
- Archaeological, historical and ecological interpretation,
- Architecture,
- Attractions development;
- Engineering;
- Landscape architecture;
- Land-use planning,
- Liaison between various levels of government; and
- Transportation planning.

### **B. Improve the Visitor Experience**

The following physical improvements should be carried out to increase visitor satisfaction in Queen Victoria Park, thereby prolonging stays:

- Widen and improve the pedestrian walk from Clifton Hill to the Dufferin Islands,
- Increase the frequency and number of stops of The Niagara Parks Commission People Mover,
- Reduce the tour bus parking in the Park;
- Reduce the number of vehicles during the peak season in the Park;
- Improve all visitor facilities to provide greater comfort and convenience at:
  - The Greenhouse;
  - Table Rock;
  - Victoria Park Restaurant; and
  - The Princess Elizabeth Building;
- Expand the range of merchandise to include the sale of quality items at these sites,
- Provide visitor information at all attractions and People Mover stops;
- Continue efforts to have horse-mounted RCMP officers provide information to visitors,
- Improve the intensity and coverage of night lighting to increase perception of nighttime safety and encourage evening use;
- Illuminate the Falls with brighter lights that are programmable,
- Install Upper Rapids lighting,
- Extend and improve The Niagara Parks Commission People Mover service to the Great Gorge Adventure, Spanish Aero Car, School of Horticulture, Niagara Glen, Floral Clock and Queenston Heights Park.

### **C. Develop and Enhance Physical Facilities**

Rather than requiring major expenditures on new attractions, the Five-Year Action Plan uses existing yearly budgets to enhance the following sites.

#### *The Hydro Museum*

The Hydro Museum should be developed as a major activity draw in Queen Victoria Park. This new facility will be paid for and operated by Ontario Hydro. The capital investment by the Commission will be to provide landscaping and to build and operate a science shop, restaurant and information centre. Revenues from these should be used for further Park development.

#### *The Greenhouse*

Upon completion of the relocation of the service yard to the Rapids View Service Centre, greater emphasis should be placed on the Greenhouse and surrounding gardens.

The modest phased expansion of the Greenhouse display spaces, upgrading of visitor facilities and enhanced programming should receive capital investment. Intensifying year-round activity would increase the Greenhouse's importance as a visitor focus and, with the Hydro Museum, improve shoulder season and winter visitation. Expanding the gardens around the Greenhouse would draw more visitors.

#### *Table Rock*

Without interfering with their ability to generate revenue, the Table Rock facilities should be expanded and refurbished to better accommodate the needs of visitors. The indoor dining areas should be expanded and the kitchen enlarged. Larger washrooms should be provided as well as a centre for visitor information. Quality merchandise that will appeal to upscale visitors should be added to the highly profitable shop. Landscaping improvements should begin.

#### *The Great Gorge Adventure*

The Great Gorge Adventure is a good example of creating an attraction by upgrading the visitor experience rather than capital spending on the facility itself. Instead of redeveloping the Great Gorge Adventure as a new attraction, make the entry, ticket office, shop and snack bar more appealing. A People Mover stop should be added and improvements should be made to the urban streetscape along River Road. The Great Gorge Adventure should receive vigorous promotion as an exciting Niagara experience.

The Great Gorge Adventure offers a powerful encounter with the Whirlpool Rapids and Gorge. This encounter can be enriched by improving the boardwalk, providing overlooks and interpretation

stations, and adding lighting to dramatize the rapids. The boardwalk should extend north to the Whirlpool at Colt's Point. Programming and interpretation by enthusiastic guides should be developed.

#### *The Princess Elizabeth Building*

If the Commission decides to build a new visitor facility at the present Princess Elizabeth Building location, it should include a ticket office and an elevator to increase the volume of people that can board the *Maid of the Mist*. Tourist information, washrooms and a People Mover stop should also be provided. The new structure, with redeveloped restaurants and visitor shops, should be designed to fit into the edge of the Gorge in order to open views of the Falls.

#### **D. Program Activities**

The most effective way to complement the natural drawing power of Niagara is with programmed activities, events and interpretation of its unique human and natural history. In Queen Victoria Park such programming will extend visitor interest throughout the day and into the night. Programming should be developed to animate visits to the Great Gorge Adventure, Niagara Glen, Old Fort Erie, the Hydro Museum, the Gateway to Ontario and Canada and the School of Horticulture.

The priorities for programming include:

- Concerts and outdoor entertainment at Oakes Garden Theatre as well as the Queen Victoria Park, Old Fort Erie and Queenston Heights Park bandshells,
- Development of themed event programs for holidays, weekends, weekdays and especially evenings with fireworks displays, programmed illumination of the Falls, entertainment and exhibits, and
- Interpretation of human and natural history along the Gorge and Upper Rapids in Queen Victoria Park, along the Whirlpool Rapids at the Great Gorge Adventure, at the Whirlpool, in Niagara Glen and at Queenston Heights Park

### ***E. Develop Marketing***

To help implement the Five-Year Action Plan, each service division of The Niagara Parks Commission must develop its own operational plan that is consistent with the overall Plan. Such planning should include:

- A statement of divisional goals,
- An analysis of the Commission's marketing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats,
- A budget and a program of action, including a timetable, and
- A strategy for dealing with interdivisional relationships to coordinate marketing

Advertising, mass-media publicity, on-site promotions, tour packaging, attractions, ticket sales and food and shop services should be coordinated. The Commission should:

- Create a Director of Marketing who will oversee and coordinate all Niagara Parks Commission marketing activities.

- Add new permanent Commission staff specifically responsible for tourism marketing and general marketing. Specialist skills are required in advertising, mass-media publicity, on-site promotions, tour packaging, ticket sales and restaurant and shop services. If new permanent positions cannot be created it may be necessary over time to change the skill mix of Niagara Parks Commission staff, or alternatively to use the services of professional advertising and public-relations firms
- Initiate a visitor-oriented service-ethic training program for all full-time and part-time Niagara Parks Commission staff who have direct contact with tourists. The program employed by Expo '86 in Vancouver is a successful model since the accommodating nature of service people, more than anything else, differentiated Expo '86 from similar events. Visitor services should be developed to meet the needs of all market segments without detracting from the services to the traditional visitor. Visitors do not just want quality attractions. They also want quality services
- Appeal to all market segments by making product and promotional developments market-driven, rather than product-driven
- Re-invest revenue generated through visitor facilities in improving services and in marketing

### ***On-Site Information and Marketing***

The lack of adequate signage and information about what is available in the Parks and throughout the Region is a real problem. Solving it can provide immediate returns at low cost.

A single common format should be used by all tourism operators. It should include:

- A common map, colour-coded by district, to aid visitor understanding and movement,
- Integrating tourism promotion and communication on Niagara transit and the People Mover;
- Adding staffed and unstaffed information kiosks at strategic locations throughout the Parks and the Region; and
- Focusing marketing through cooperative research, advertising and promotion

#### ***F. Undertake Detailed Planning***

The Commission must refine the 20-Year Plan. Comprehensive development plans must be created for each major Parks node and coordinated with engineering and transportation planning. Queen Victoria Park should be the main priority. All components of the Five-Year Plan should be coordinated within the comprehensive development plan to maintain future options, including changes to the Parkway, attractions, pedestrian linkages, promenades, landscaped areas and phasing out of the Ontario Hydro works.

#### ***G. Improve the Transportation System***

The Commission's primary transportation thrust for the first five years should be the provision of convenient visitor movement in Queen Victoria Park. Reducing traffic is the first step. Extending the People Mover and providing more stops is the second. Other steps, to be taken towards the end of the first five years, include:

- Reducing the width of the Parkway through Queen Victoria Park,
- Managing traffic during the visitor peak season, and
- Maintaining the continuity of the Parkway scenic drive through Queen Victoria Park during the shoulder season

#### ***H. Develop a Five-Year Financial Plan***

A financial plan for the first five years is a necessary adjunct to the Action Plan.

The Five-Year Action Plan is grounded in the self-funding ability of the Commission and takes place entirely within its lands. By using the existing operational budgets for attraction enhancement, maintenance, programming, planning, horticulture and landscape improvement, the visitor's experience can be upgraded.

Maintaining all existing revenues plus enhancement of the Commission's fiscal ability to undertake major capital projects will be essential for realizing the Five-Year Action Plan.

The progress of the first five years should be reviewed in the fifth year. At that time, planning for the next five years should begin. Those plans should become part of an action plan for the second five years.

## **II. Interdependent Cooperative Actions**

Independent cooperative actions to be undertaken by the Commission with others in the Five-Year Action Plan consist of:

- A. Integrating Planning;***
- B. Integrating Transportation;***
- C. Integrating Programming; and***
- D. Integrating Marketing.***

### ***A. Integrating Planning***

Several interdependent, cooperative planning actions related to maintaining compatible development along adjacent lands are discussed below. A multi-participant process is already successfully under way involving the Commission, the Province, the Region and the area Municipalities.

Among the planning issues requiring joint resolution are:

- Protecting the ecological integrity of Frenchman's Creek and other high-value natural areas not owned by the Commission;
- Protecting the irreplaceable historical and archaeological resources along the Niagara corridor,
- Establishing three-dimensional development guidelines for privately-held lands in the City of Niagara Falls abutting Queen Victoria Park and along River Road north to the Whirlpool,
- Establishing urban development plans for the private tourism area in the City of Niagara Falls adjacent to Queen Victoria Park,
- Establishing development guidelines for lands next to the North and South Boulevards of the Niagara Parkway;
- Maintaining compatible development along Ontario's Niagara Parks from Lake to Lake, including resolution of the following:
  - landscaping standards for private lands,
  - continuation of adjacent fruit-growing areas and vineyards,
  - preservation of natural areas at the confluences of creeks,
  - design standards for estate residential development,
  - continuation of the controlled-access road system;
  - provision of natural and planted landscape buffers,
  - minimization or elimination of commercial uses, and
  - controlling visual and physical intrusion of signs
- Establishing landscaping standards for Regional and Municipal lands adjacent to Ontario's Niagara Parks,
- Establishing planning and policy compatibility with Provincial Ministries, Municipalities, the Region and Ontario Hydro in secondary plans and land-use and development by-laws for all lands adjacent to the Commission's properties,
- Identifying, monitoring and encouraging the cleaning up of pollution hot spots and toxic sites along the Niagara River;
- Coordinating the integration of pedestrian linkages between the private sector and Commission Lands, and
- Establishing green linkages extending from the River and Park into the Municipalities



### ***B. Integrating Transportation***

Although the benefits of investing in transportation are hard to measure, Niagara would not be the attraction it is today if such investments had not been made in the past. Most of the transportation recommendations contained in this report are the principal responsibility of jurisdictions beyond The Niagara Parks Commission. All stakeholders in Niagara's future will have to work together to make Niagara easily accessible.

After meetings with staff representatives of the Province, Region, the City of Niagara Falls and the Commission, it was mutually agreed that the Regional Municipality of Niagara, which has jurisdiction over most of the arterial roads in the Region, should take the coordinating lead. As a result, steps have been taken to re-establish a group, with representatives of the three levels of government and The Niagara Parks Commission, to evaluate this report and to establish the basis for planning, design and implementation.

This group must address the following:

- Allowing the Parks to achieve their full potential through progressive integration of transportation systems to serve the visitors;
- Reviewing policies pertaining to transit, People Mover, parking and transportation development in Niagara with adjoining Municipalities, the Region and the Ministry of Transportation, including:
  - encouraging implementation of a high-speed boat link between Toronto and Queenston,

- increasing capacity of Canadian Immigration at the Rainbow, Peace and Whirlpool Bridges,
- encouraging improved intercity bus service between Canada and the United States, and
- encouraging high-speed rail links to Niagara Falls
- Improving access to Fort Erie and the Niagara Parkway, including
  - a coordinated review of Queen Elizabeth Way, Regional and Municipal roads, and
  - changing the configuration of the Niagara Parkway to simplify roads around Mather Arch.
- Developing signage systems with the other agencies along the Niagara Parkway and connecting road systems to inform visitors about points of interest,
- Reducing conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles in Queen Victoria Park,
- Reducing the impact of parked tour buses,
- Creating an additional parking node and People Mover terminal at the Whirlpool,
- Preserving transportation corridors for the future, and
- Making it easy for visitors to transfer between the People Mover and Niagara Transit

### ***C. Integrating Programming***

The joint programming of activities at special events, festivals, holidays and celebrations can significantly add to the drawing appeal of Niagara throughout the year. Participants could include the Parks Commission, the City, the Municipalities, the Province, the Federal Government, the Niagara Frontier Region of the New York State Office of Parks, Reservation and Historic Preservation and the City of Niagara Falls, New York. A great number of visitors come into the Parks on Canada Day, Victoria Day and Labour Day. Fireworks, laser shows and live music could hold these visitors into the evening. Programming themed on spring flowers and fall colours could also be jointly orchestrated. Existing joint programming such as the Festival of Lights must be revitalized.

#### ***D. Integrating Marketing***

The working relationships of all members of Niagara's tourism industry must be improved. Since the Falls provide economic benefits to the Region, Province and Canada, the senior levels of government should actively participate in the marketing of Niagara.

To create an image of Niagara as a place to stay and not just as a place to stop requires that visitors be repeatedly told about what the area has to offer. Such promotions are expensive, but economies can be achieved through cooperative efforts. As mentioned earlier, The Niagara Parks Commission does not suffer from competition with other attractions in the Niagara Area. Therefore, cooperative advertising with these other attractions may be mutually beneficial.

It is impossible to overestimate the contribution to Niagara's success that can be made by bus and taxi drivers, hotel, restaurants and attractions staff, and other service people.

Working together, the tourism community can:

- Seek cost savings through joint initiatives directed at specific market segments
- Alter the image of the area from just a stopover to a stayover.
- Promote the diversity of attractions throughout the Region

- Undertake mutually reinforcing, cooperative marketing and promotional efforts with the tourism programs of other agencies appealing to similar market segments, such as:
  - The National Capital Commission;
  - The St. Lawrence Parks Commission; and
  - The Metro Toronto Convention and Visitors Bureau

In planning tourism activities and marketing programs, ensure the participation of local residents before plans are finalized to avoid direct conflicts with their lifestyles and property. It will be important to obtain the support of the community by organizing facilities and events that harmonize with the needs of local residents.

Ideally, these marketing efforts will be developed and implemented through various cooperative arrangements with the local tourism industry and the Provincial and Federal governments.

These include:

- Promoting Ontario's Niagara Parks as part of Federal and Provincial marketing packages. This is an effective way to reach international visitors.
- Promoting Ontario's Niagara Parks in packages of Regional attractions. This will draw untapped visitors from Toronto, southern Ontario and New York with day, overnight and weekend packages.
- Promoting Ontario's Niagara Parks in marketing packages that combine the best City of Niagara Falls attractions with the experiences and attractions in the Parks. For national and international markets, the City and the Parks will offer a complementary mix.
- Promotion should focus on the most lucrative markets. In Ontario these are the up-scale Toronto market for same-day adventures, themed trips and weekend getaway packages with emphasis on the Niagara adventure, history, the natural environment and the Niagara River Recreation Trail. For the Canadian market, the focus should be on history and visiting the natural wonder. For international markets, getting tourists to stay overnight while visiting the Falls must receive the orchestrated packaging of Niagara's best in attractions, accommodation and food. Coordinated participation of the public sector and private tourism interests will be essential
- Promoting quality, good value, excitement, adventure, history and experience of nature, supported with high-quality attractions, services and accommodation that have visitor needs as the primary objective, will be key to attracting and holding the desired markets and providing the staging for additional phases of development
- Promoting to off-season and winter visitors to increase fall, winter and spring tourism will also require coordinated packaging of Parks and private tourism attractions, combined with innovative programming

Off-season visits are already substantial, particularly in the spring and among childless couples. Natural and educational themes carried into all seasons will increase visitation particularly for senior citizens and school programs. As well, entertainment and dining packages, some of which could combine aspects of nature and education, will appeal to upscale markets.

Events should be created around holidays, festival of lights, entertainment, exhibits, trade fairs, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter and spring flowers.

People from the Region comprise a sizable market that already visits year-round. Upgrading shopping, restaurant and entertainment facilities will result in longer visits and greater off-season returns to the business community.

Many people return to Niagara. This indicates that there is a robust potential for expansion into all seasons if there is a variety of rewarding experiences. Marketing should emphasize constantly changing activities and events throughout the seasons, including facilities, attractions, programming, events and festivals.

## **The Gateway to Ontario and Canada**

The number-one priority of the Five-Year Action Plan is to develop the Gateway to Ontario and Canada on the lands of The Niagara Parks Commission and the Murray Hill site as a joint venture of the Commission and Ontario Hydro. The Governments of Canada and Ontario, the Regional Municipality of Niagara, the City of Niagara Falls and the Canadian business community should also contribute to this key strategic attraction in Niagara Falls.

*Step One:* Secure, acquire or develop the site with Ontario Hydro.

*Step Two:* Develop comprehensive strategies, planning and phasing for the entire site from the private tourism area into the Gorge, including:

- A revenue-producing component,
- The visitor reception and interpretation facility;
- Linkages to the Falls and Queen Victoria Park; and
- The Gorge Interpretation Centre

*Step Three:* Develop requirements and detailed planning for the revenue-producing components of the Murray Hill site, such as:

- A transportation terminal for interchanges between streetcars, Niagara Transit, tour buses and The Niagara Parks Commission People Mover,
- Two levels of underground parking,

- A system of themed interior pedestrian streets, connecting to the transportation terminal, the visitor reception and interpretation component of the Gateway, the entertainment and retail facilities, and entrances to surrounding private-sector developments,
- Two levels of retail shops, stores and restaurants along galleria-like interior streets;
- A significant entertainment component of cabarets, theatres, cinemas and a night-club,
- A Niagara Falls convention or festival centre, sufficiently large to attract major events; and
- Landscaping to integrate the facility with the Park and give new character to the bordering streets.

*Step Four:* Jointly with Ontario Hydro develop the terms of reference and call for proposals from the Canadian business community to develop the parcel of land between the Con Rail right-of-way and Buchanan Avenue based on the above components. Such proposals would ensure that the Commission and Ontario Hydro could select the one with the greatest imagination, highest quality and greatest economic return.

*Step Five:* Construct the commercial component and generate a continuing flow of revenue to the Commission and Ontario Hydro to the end of the reversion period.

*Step Six:* Plan the visitor reception and interpretation components to:

- Give visitors an overview of Ontario's Niagara Parks, the Region, Ontario and Canada,
- Showcase the people, other tourist destinations, cities, culture and technology of Ontario and Canada,
- Provide visitor information,
- Imaginatively portray the human and natural history;
- Provide facilities for themed and programmed events, and
- Invite the participation of the Federal and Provincial Governments

*Step Seven:* Implement the visitor reception and interpretation components overlooking the Falls and Queen Victoria Park to showcase Niagara, the Region, Ontario and Canada, and link with Queen Victoria Park, the Falls, the Gorge, the new commercial component and the adjacent private-sector tourism developments.

*Step Eight:* Develop additional phases of the Gateway to include pedestrian linkages of covered stairs and escalators across the Treed Moraine to provide convenient access to Queen Victoria Park and the Falls and enlarging the existing Hydro elevators and tunnels as a major visitor linkage between the Gateway and Queen Victoria Park.

### ***Attitude for the Five-Year Action Plan***

Each activity and expenditure of the Five-Year Action Plan must aim toward the attitude of *cooperation, health and fit* outlined earlier. Within that framework, serving the needs of the visitor must become the guiding force in all decision making.

### ***Common Goals, Complementary Actions for the Five-Year Action Plan***

All stakeholders must realize that they do have goals in common, including maintaining market share, serving existing markets and developing new ones.

At the same time, everyone has different ways of achieving these objectives. Creating the environment for cooperation will require improving communication among all parties. Complementary actions that recognize and work with the legitimate differences in approaches among private and public stakeholders – rather than artificially imposing a uniform approach – will support achieving common goals.

### *Model for Cooperation*

Stakeholders must agree in principle on a model for cooperation before they can work together to define the specific elements. This framework should set out commonly determined principles, objectives and strategies for action. It can establish mechanisms needed to arrive at decisions, do planning, arrange financial contributions and ensure that projects are completed.

Tourism development agreements entered into between the Federal and Provincial governments are a useful precedent. They provide for initiatives to be undertaken on a project-by-project basis by any combination of parties whose commitments are set out in subsidiary agreements. Such agreements contain timetables for developing each initiative.

With such a framework in place, the Commission and the local tourism industry would be well-positioned to capitalize on the resources available through the senior-level governments.



### Priorities

The Five-Year Action Plan outlined the Commission's highest priorities for the first five years. Also starting at year one are planning and implementation activities that are strategic to the 20-Year Plan. Because of the magnitude of the Plan, we have divided these activities in half and will deal with them below a decade at a time. The priorities for the first ten years accomplish the initial crucial steps of setting up the process and organization; increasing attractions, stay and revenues; and developing the Gateway to Ontario and Canada. The priorities for the second ten years are development-oriented and capital-intensive, and are designed to create visitor facilities and attractions from Lake to Lake.

Naturally, these priorities assume that the Commission's revenues and profits will continue to grow as the 20-Year Plan is implemented. Even so, the more elaborate and expensive capital goals may require Provincial and Federal assistance.

The priorities for the first decade call for basic initiatives for:

- Establishing the mechanisms for implementation,
- Undertaking interim enhancements within the Parks,
- Planning for implementation, including development within the lands of the Commission, joint initiatives and thematic developments of nodes,
- Developing mechanisms for cooperation,
- Consolidating opportunities into improved and new attractions and services, particularly in the Primary Tourism Area from Queenston to Chippawa, and
- Integrating the efforts of The Niagara Parks Commission, City, Region and private sector for urban planning, traffic, transportation, marketing and promotion initiatives

The priorities for the second decade include:

- Developing capital-intensive projects to create new visitor facilities and attractions in Queen Victoria Park,
- Developing capital-intensive projects to create new facilities and attractions from the Whirlpool Rapids to Queenston Heights Park,

- Developing projects to create new visitor facilities and attractions along the North and South Boulevards,
- Consolidating and strengthening the attractions and service base at an enhanced level to increase revenues to offset development costs;
- Developing the Niagara Parks North and South Gateways; and
- Building on the new partnerships to provide sustained benefits for all stakeholders

On the pages that follow, we look at the priorities in this order:

- Priorities for the first decade that the Commission can undertake on its own,
- Interdependent first-decade priorities that will require cooperation with others,
- Priorities for the second decade that the Commission can undertake on its own, and
- Interdependent second-decade priorities that will require cooperation with others



## Niagara Parks Commission Priorities for the First Decade

### General

A. Develop detailed marketing strategies, plans and targets for:

- general promotion;
- attracting specific market segments,
- promoting specific attractions; and
- cooperative promotional efforts

B. Refine the exact details of the planning for each node and attraction.

C. Review requirements for additional office space.

D. Conduct annual reviews of marketing strategies and plans.

E. Expand and improve the existing revenue-generating attractions and facilities.

F. Promote the Niagara River Recreation Trail as a regional attraction.

G. Implement maintenance programs for all Park and visitor facilities.

H. Conduct annual reviews of integrated marketing strategies and plans.

I. Cooperate with the Municipalities to establish design and environmental standards for development on lands adjacent to the Parkway, such as River Road in Niagara Falls and sites along the North and South Boulevards.

J. Implement coordinated signage from Lake to Lake.

### Queen Victoria Park

A. Develop landscape assessment and management programs for the trees.

B. Develop a master planting plan.

C. Develop a preservation plan for the trees on the Treed Moraine and in the Park.

D. Evaluate the need for a Commission staff training centre and day-care centre.

E. Develop landscaping and architectural design standards for Commission structures.

F. Undertake a comprehensive development plan for Queen Victoria Park including detailed planning to accommodate each component of the 20-Year Plan.

G. Improve the pedestrian environment between the Dufferin Islands and the Rainbow Bridge, including Table Rock.

H. Develop revenue-generating tourist facilities at the Greenhouse.

I. Increase marketing for existing Niagara Parks Commission attractions and facilities.

J. Redevelop the pedestrian walkways along the edge of the Gorge into a Pedestrian Promenade.

K. Repair and improve the Oakes Garden Theatre for displays, exhibits and concerts.

L. Move the work yard adjacent to the Rose Garden to the Rapids View Service Centre.

M. Move the Central Work Yard to the Rapids View Service Centre.

N. Begin the phased enlargement of the Greenhouse-Galleria as a complex of indoor and outdoor gardens and display spaces.

O. Develop pedestrian linkages to the Gateway, Skylon and private tourism areas.

P. Enhance the Dufferin Islands as a place of outdoor activity, with improved landscaping, lighting, swimming and picnicking areas, and a Pedestrian Promenade. Remove the roads and parking.

Q. Develop interpretation, exhibits and information stations along the Pedestrian Promenade.

R. Respond to the independent restaurant consultant on the adequacy of the indoor and outdoor spaces at the Victoria Park Restaurant.

S. Develop and implement year-round programming of activities, events and festivals in Queen Victoria Park.

T. Develop the Gorge Interpretative Walk between the Table Rock Scenic Tunnels and the *Maid of the Mist* Incline Railway.

### The Whirlpool Rapids, Whirlpool and Niagara Glen

A. Develop a master landscape plan for the Whirlpool Golf Course, including comprehensive re-landscaping to substantially increase its quality. Include development of a landscaped pool and appropriate irrigation system.

B. Undertake a comprehensive site analysis prior to all planning and development, for ecological and archaeological inventories and environmental assessment.

C. Create an environmental management program for the protection and enhancement of these natural sites. Develop guidelines that will allow them to be opened for tourists while still preserving their natural integrity.

- D. Undertake a comprehensive development plan for the Whirlpool/Niagara Glen node including the detailed planning for each component.
- E. Continue to make the Niagara River Recreation Trail a natural, regenerated landscape along the edge of the Gorge providing interpretation view points between Colt's Point and Wintergreen Flats.
- F. Clear the views, improve the planting, and establish outlooks and trails along the Parkway so that tourists can enjoy vistas of the Whirlpool.
- G. Redevelop the Great Gorge Adventure facilities and Rapids Interpretative Walk as an attraction, including illumination of the Whirlpool Rapids.
- H. Implement an interpretation program for the Great Gorge Adventure.
- I. Improve tourist facilities, including provision of tourist information at the Spanish Aero Car.
- J. Extend the People Mover to stop at the Great Gorge Adventure, Spanish Aero Car, Thompson Point and Wintergreen Flats.
- K. Expand parking at the Whirlpool restaurant and integrate it with appropriate landscaping.
- L. Upgrade the nature trails in Niagara Glen and around the Whirlpool.
- M. Extend the Rapids Interpretative Walk from the Great Gorge Adventure around the Whirlpool to Thompson Point.
- N. Extend the Rapids Interpretative Walk from Thompson Point to Crip's Eddy at Niagara Glen.
- O. Develop an elevator ride from the Interpretative Walk to the Spanish Aero Car.

- P. Acquire lands west of the Spanish Aero Car for future development as a parking lot and People Mover terminal.
- Q. Plan and implement the interpretation program for the Whirlpool.
- R. Develop interpretation of the geology, history of the Falls, and ecology along the Gorge interpretation walk.
- S. Promote the Great Gorge Adventure, the Whirlpool and Niagara Glen.
- T. Consider bicycle rentals at the Spanish Aero Car.
- U. Light the Whirlpool Rapids.

#### ***The Whirlpool Golf Course and School of Horticulture***

- A. Document the School's horticultural collections. Structure the collections by themes for display and interpretation.
- B. Develop outreach programs for children and adults. Create a lecture series to promote interest in nature and plants.
- C. Establish programs for children's education at the School.
- D. Develop a comprehensive development plan for the School to upgrade its gardens and collections with design unity, thus creating a more significant botanical and horticultural attraction.
- E. Create a curriculum development strategy for the School that includes:
  - re-establishing its identity as an educational institution;
  - expanding its curriculum to make the horticultural aspects more comprehensive and to develop the resources to protect and manage the natural environment of the Parks,

- expanding options for academic and practical programs,
  - considering affiliation with related institutions; and
  - pursuing university accreditation for selected courses
- F. Install an irrigation system for the School and Whirlpool Golf Course.
  - G. Provide visitors with a wider choice of merchandise at the School's shops, emphasizing items relating to horticulture, botany and nature. Improve the effectiveness of marketing in the shops.
  - H. Develop a volunteer program at the School.
  - I. Develop interpretative horticultural walks at the School.
  - J. Extend programs for winter activities, such as outdoor ice skating, to give the Golf Course intensive year-round use.
  - K. Increase promotion and marketing of the Golf Course restaurant, shop and sports-related facilities to capture the upscale, recreation-oriented segment of the tourist market.
  - L. Promote the Golf Course activities as a winter attraction.
  - M. Develop a master landscaping plan for the Whirlpool Golf Course.

### *Queenston Heights Park*

- A. Open vistas to the River, the origin of the Falls, and the Gorge.
- B. Develop adventure and interpretation trails along the Niagara Escarpment leading to the Queenston Quarry Cement Mines and Kilns.
- C. Extend the People Mover to Queenston Heights.
- D. Consider additional afternoon performances at the Queenston Heights bandshell.
- E. Provide entertainment at the Queenston Heights Restaurant to increase off-season and nighttime activity.
- F. Undertake a comprehensive development plan for Queenston Heights Park including the detailed planning for each component.
- G. Respond to the independent restaurant consultant on the adequacy of the indoor and outdoor spaces at the Queenston Heights Restaurant.
- H. Consider restaurant and retail expansion.
- I. Create a children's adventure playground and further develop the adult outdoor recreation areas.
- J. Develop outdoor interpretation trails for the birth of the Falls at the Escarpment and extending along the Gorge.
- K. Plan programs in conjunction with Parks Canada for the interpretation and animation of the natural and historical significance of this site.
- L. Promote Queenston Heights Park.

### *The North Boulevard of the Niagara Parkway*

- A. Map and inventory the natural, historical and archaeological resources of the North Boulevard.
- B. Protect sensitive or unique ecological areas.
- C. Clear the river view points.
- D. Develop historical gardens and plant collections at McFarland House.
- E. Develop the Niagara River Recreation Trail to Niagara-on-the-Lake.
- F. Develop historical markers and interpretation displays along the Niagara River Recreation Trail.
- G. Promote the Trail as a Regional attraction.
- H. Undertake a comprehensive development plan for the North Boulevard including the detailed planning for each component.
- I. Develop a tree-management program to maintain the unique landscape quality.
- J. Develop an outdoor interpretation program, nature trails and picnic areas at Brown's Point.
- K. Develop a picnic area at Paradise Grove.
- L. Encourage wildlife habitat areas along the River edge and provide for their interpretation and viewing.
- M. Develop a natural history and historical interpretation program for McFarland Point Park, Mackenzie House, the Portage Road, Brown's Point and sites along the Niagara River Recreation Trail.
- N. Plan and develop the Niagara Parks Gateway North.
- O. Consider bicycle rentals at the Niagara Parks Gateway North.

### *The South Boulevard of the Niagara Parkway*

- A. Map and inventory the natural, historical and archaeological resources of the South Boulevard.
- B. Develop a strategy to landscape the South Boulevard based on complementing and extending the indigenous qualities of adjacent natural areas and creeks.
- C. Develop a new maintenance program to create a more natural, indigenous, scenic landscape, particularly along the River edge and at the confluences of the creeks.
- D. Analyze significant natural areas to determine their ecological sensitivity and which ones should be protected and allowed to regenerate naturally.
- E. Undertake a comprehensive development plan for the South Boulevard including detailed planning for each component.
- F. Acquire sites or work with other agencies to protect significant natural areas.
- G. Repair Mather Arch and surrounding paved areas. Rebuild washrooms and the tourist information booth. (Assumes Mather Arch will not be obliterated by expansion of the Peace Bridge.)
- H. Clarify the role of the Willoughby Historical Museum.
- I. Develop a major children's playground at King's Bridge Park.
- J. Expand the beach and picnic facilities at King's Bridge Park.
- K. Prepare detailed development plan for Mather Park.
- L. Develop historical markers.
- M. Develop the Niagara Parks Gateway South at Mather Park.

N. Develop a comprehensive landscape plan based on working with the unique growing conditions, minimizing mowed grass and allowing the indigenous character to flourish.

O. Consider bicycle rentals at Chippawa, Miller's Creek and the Niagara Parks Gateway South.

#### ***Town of Fort Erie***

A. Upgrade the Park along the Riverfront for active public use.

B. Begin an archaeological inventory of sites along the River to determine the extent of resources for interpretation.

C. Undertake a comprehensive development plan for the Town of Fort Erie Riverfront Park including detailed planning for each component.

#### ***Old Fort Erie***

A. Expand the people activities at the Fort Erie picnic grounds and bandshell, making them a centre of outdoor activity for the community.

B. Develop a new picnic pavilion.

C. Begin an archaeological inventory of sites to determine the extent of resources for interpretation.

D. Expand animation of activities at the Fort to include the interpretation of archaeological sites.

E. Undertake a comprehensive development plan including the detailed planning for additional site components.

F. Improve the visitor facilities at Old Fort Erie as visitation increases. Add tourist information.

### **Interdependent Priorities for the First Decade**

#### ***General***

A. Re-consider the validity of The Niagara Parks Commission continuing to own land outside the Niagara Parkway corridor, specifically:

- Charles Daley Park,
- Battlefield House;
- Drummond Hill Cemetery and Lundy's Lane Battlefield; and
- Butler's Burial Ground

B. Plan the thematic development of each of the centres of attraction by:

- identifying the potential opportunities and roles for The Niagara Parks Commission, private sector and other agencies,
- maximizing the direct and indirect economic benefits, and
- providing maximum diversity of attractions and services, restaurants, entertainment facilities, shops and educational opportunities

C. Join with other agencies in developing global signage to inform visitors about regional points of interest along the Niagara Parkway.

D. Continue a coordinated review with the adjoining Municipalities, the Region and the Ministry of Transportation on the impact of traffic changes desired by the Commission.

E. Develop a plan for property acquisition and management.

F. Encourage preservation of the Treed Moraine through acquisition and provision of tax credits to the land owners.

G. Clarify the role of The Niagara Parks Commission in the Lundy's Lane Historical Museum and the Willoughby Historical Museum.

H. Reduce tour bus congestion in Queen Victoria Park by:

- implementing a trial remote bus parking and call-back scheme, and
- evaluating the use of designated People Mover vehicles to transport tour groups between Queen Victoria Park and attractions

I. Make parking more convenient for visitors by simplifying public/private parking facilities in tourist areas, including access, signage and rates charged.

J. Continue a coordinated review of transportation issues with adjoining Municipalities, the Region, the Ministry of Transportation, the Bridge Commissions, Canada Immigration and Customs, tour bus operators and others as required on the following issues:

- transforming Queen Victoria Park into a pedestrian domain,
- developing linkages to the Park and the City at the Greenhouse, Canadian Niagara Power Plant, Incline Railway, Murray Hill and the Skylon;
- developing a second parking node and an extension of the People Mover system,
- encouraging the review of private tour bus routes,
- integrating tourism movement with the City of Niagara Falls street system,
- reviewing the proposal for a new bridge or tunnel to the United States south of the Falls rapids, and
- encouraging the review of signage from the Queen Elizabeth Way to Fort Erie

K. Work with the Ministry of Natural Resources, the Ministry of Culture and Communication, the Ontario Heritage Foundation and other Provincial agencies to initiate on-site research of locations relating to the natural environment, archaeological resources, the War of 1812 and previous industrial development.

L. Consider developing a linkage from the Niagara River Recreation Trail to the heritage trail along the old Michigan Central Railway line.

M. Consider developing a linkage from the Niagara River Recreation Trail along the Welland River to the Welland Canal.

N. Make transportation more convenient for visitors through continued participation in joint City, Niagara Parks Commission and Ministry of Transportation reviews of transit, People Mover, parking and transit policies and strategies in the Region, including:

- extending the People Mover system,
- establishing a system of vehicles for tourist movement in the City with interconnections to The Niagara Parks Commission People Mover system,
- endorsing the protection of a linear transit corridor on the Con Rail right-of-way to link with The Niagara Parks Commission People Mover; and
- encouraging the establishment of a comprehensive tourist parking agency.

#### **Queen Victoria Park**

A. Establish working relationships with organizations such as the Art Gallery of Ontario, Ontario Hydro, Ontario Science Centre, the Royal Ontario Museum and Science North as the creative resource for new interpretation attractions.

B. Implement short-term experimental traffic re-routing in the Park.

C. Complete the pedestrian linkage within Queen Victoria Park at the Jolley Cut.

D. Continue discussions with Niagara Transit regarding integration of their system and The Niagara Parks Commission People Mover.

E. Work with the City and Province to improve traffic signage from the Queen Elizabeth Way and the Rainbow Bridge.

F. Continue to provide tourism information in the Park for Ontario's Niagara Parks, City, Region and Province.

G. Market passbook package tours of Niagara Falls and Niagara Parks Commission attractions.

H. Promote new attractions and experiences to all segments of the tourism market.

I. Reduce vehicular traffic through Queen Victoria Park through joint participation in implementing the following:

- improving pedestrian connections between the Park and private tourism areas;
- considering the development of a north-south arterial from Highway 420 to the parking developed above the Treed Moraine;
- traffic management schemes to reduce non-critical traffic through Queen Victoria Park (for example, one-way southbound traffic from Murray Hill to Fraser Hill during peak season),

- integrated bus and car parking at the Gateway to Ontario and Canada, including the Skylon and Pyramid Place,
- multi-attraction package visits to encourage travelling between attractions on foot and escalators, in addition to The Niagara Parks Commission and City people movers; and
- joint City, Region, Ministry of Transportation and Niagara Parks Commission review of the Niagara road system, including functional improvements, operational measures, signage and parking by considering
  - advanced redirection of traffic to the Rapids View Parking Lot;
  - advanced redirection of traffic on Highway 420 and the Queen Elizabeth Way to the upper parking lots; and
  - continuing to create year-round programs for activities, events and festivals to capture the benefits of increased stay

#### **Queenston Heights Park**

A. Implement programs with Parks Canada for the interpretation and animation of the natural and historical significance of Queenston Heights.

#### **The North Boulevard of the Niagara Parkway**

A. Work with Parks Canada to develop a program depicting the history and activities of Fort George.

B. Work with Parks Canada to carry out research on the two ships built at Fort George, the *Snow Hawk* and the *Charity*, as a prelude to providing public interpretation attractions.

- C. Provide information for loop bicycle trips extending from the Niagara River Recreation Trail along the side roads into the fruit-growing and agricultural area.
- D. Work with Parks Canada to implement programs depicting the history of Fort George.
- E. Work with the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake and Parks Canada to complete and integrate related components of the Niagara Parks Gateway North.
- F. Participate in a review of strategies to minimize the impacts on the Old Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake including:
  - peripheral parking and People Mover system, and
  - co-development of the Niagara Parks Gateway North with Parks Canada and the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake

#### **Fort George**

- A. Discuss plans for the Niagara Parks Gateway North and Fort George Historical Site with Parks Canada and Niagara-on-the-Lake.

#### **The South Boulevard of the Niagara Parkway**

- A. Work with the appropriate levels of government on an ongoing basis to protect the ecological integrity of Ussher's, Boyer's, Black, Baker's, Miller's and Frenchman's Creeks and enhance their contribution to the natural landscape qualities of the Parkway.
- B. Secure the long-term future of Navy Island as a unique natural area either by acquisition or cooperative arrangement with Parks Canada.

- C. Develop an implementation plan with the Ministry of Education to create outdoor education centres at various locations for use by Ontario schoolchildren.

- D. Undertake, document and interpret the results of a comprehensive historical survey and site research to identify the historical resources that could become the basis for developing site attractions.

#### **Town of Fort Erie**

- A. Invite the Ministry of Culture and Communication and the Royal Ontario Museum to undertake historical and archaeological surveys and site research to identify the resources that could become the basis for developing site attractions.

- B. Consider acquiring riverfront properties as they become available to form a continuous park from Lake to Lake.

- C. Improve access to Fort Erie and the Niagara Parkway by:

- participating in a coordinated review of the Queen Elizabeth Way, Regional and Municipal roads, and
- changing the configuration of the Niagara Parkway to simplify roads around Mather Arch

- D. Provide input into the Peace Bridge expansion program.

### **Niagara Parks Commission Priorities for the Second Decade**

#### **General**

- A. Review and evaluate progress on the priorities for the first decade.
- B. Re-establish goals and objectives and reassess plans for the second decade.
- C. Re-establish implementation priorities for next five years.
- D. Conduct annual reviews of marketing strategy and plans.
- E. Develop a financial plan for the second decade.

#### **Queen Victoria Park**

- A. Continue on-going renovations to existing Park structures to improve architectural quality.
- B. Redevelop Table Rock visitor facilities and landscaping.
- C. Develop the Ontario Power Generating Station as year-round Falls and Gorge viewing centre with access to the Gorge Interpretative Walk. Include interpretation exhibits and visitor facilities.
- D. Develop the Canadian Niagara Power Plant as a Forum for year-round entertainment and activity. Include shops and restaurants with arrangements for outdoor dining, the development of an animated Parks museum and an outdoor skating rink in the forebay.

- E. Expand the Greenhouse to create the Greenhouse-Galleria: an indoor /outdoor garden, activity and people link between the Toronto Generating Plant and the Canadian Niagara Power Plant. Expand the garden areas between the Greenhouse and the Treed Moraine.
- F. Develop scenic theme gardens and special-interest gardens between Murray Street and Clifton Hill.
- G. Expand the Queen Victoria Restaurant to include outdoor eateries.
- H. Redevelop the Niagara Parkway through Queen Victoria Park. Adjust its alignment to accommodate facilities and landscape changes. Revise dimensions to suit vehicular volumes and redevelop portions for pedestrian use.
- I. Continue participation in developing additional phases of the Gateway to Ontario and Canada.
- J. Develop pedestrian linkages to the Greenhouse-Galleria and the Forum from the private tourism area.
- K. Enclose and renovate the Queen Victoria Restaurant terraces to increase year-round revenue.
- L. Evaluate the lower Gorge ride connection between the Scenic Tunnels and the *Maid of Mist*.

#### ***The Whirlpool Rapids, Whirlpool, and Niagara Glen***

- A. Renovate and expand the indoor and outdoor spaces of the Whirlpool Restaurant.
- B. Develop an elevator ride from the Interpretative Walk to Thompson Point.
- C. Develop an elevator ride from the Interpretative Walk to Wintergreen Flats.
- D. Develop visitor facilities at Thompson Point consisting of a viewing terrace, restaurant, shop, second Spanish Aero Car entrance, washrooms, visitor information centre and People Mover stop.
- E. Develop an interpretation centre at Wintergreen Flats with interpretation staff to lead guided tours. Develop a restaurant and shop with nature-related merchandise.
- F. Develop Wintergreen Flats with indigenous, regenerated landscaping to fit in with the Niagara Glen natural setting. Move picnic tables to above the Flats. Rebuild the sewer system.
- G. Redevelop the Spanish Aero Car buildings and site to take advantage of the view of the Whirlpool, thereby heightening the experience for visitors. Add a second Aero Car.
- H. Build a second parking lot and People Mover station at the Whirlpool. Consider bicycle rentals.

#### ***The Whirlpool Golf Course and School of Horticulture***

- A. Implement the master landscaping plan for the Whirlpool Golf Course.
- B. Implement the comprehensive development plan for the School gardens.

- C. Expand the Visitor Reception Centre at the School to create a more comprehensive gift shop and a garden restaurant.
- D. Expand the School facilities and implement curriculum development programs.

#### ***Queenston Heights Park***

- A. Develop an interpretation centre for the human and natural history.
- B. Expand the natural and historical interpretation program along the Escarpment and at the Park.
- C. Extend the People Mover to Queenston Wharf.
- D. Acquire and develop the Queenston Wharf as:
  - a point of entry to the Parks System via high-speed boat connection from Toronto,
  - a reception centre with visitor information, washroom, People Mover stop and bicycle-rental concession, and
  - the terminus for the Gorge Interpretative Walk.
- E. Extend the Niagara River Recreation Trail to Queenston Dock.

#### ***The North Boulevard of the Niagara Parkway***

- A. Create a pavilion and activity node at McFarland Point Park.
- B. Develop significant historical sites as research uncovers them.
- C. Continue to maintain the unique character of the North Boulevard.



#### ***The South Boulevard of the Niagara Parkway***

- A. Continue developing picnic and scenic areas.
- B. Re-develop the Miller's Creek Campsite and Marina.
- C. Develop an outdoor interpretation centre and trails at Frenchman's Creek.
- D. Develop the Town of Fort Erie Riverfront Park.
- E. Develop the Navy Island Outdoor Education Centre.
- F. Continue efforts to improve landscaping along the South Boulevard.
- G. Develop the archaeological and historical sites as they are researched.
- H. Create a landscape theme and development plan to upgrade Mather Park as a place of activity.
- I. Undertake the reorganization of Mather Park and Niagara Parkway roadworks to create a large continuous area of parkland and improve vehicular circulation in conjunction with plans to expand the Peace Bridge.

#### ***Old Fort Erie***

- A. Develop the archaeological sites as living villages of Woodland Culture people and provide an interpretation centre to portray the 5000 years of human history at this site.

### **Interdependent Priorities for the Second Decade**

#### ***General***

- A. Review and evaluate progress on the interdependent priorities for the first decade.
- B. Re-establish goals and objectives and re-assess priorities for the second decade.
- C. Re-evaluate implementation priorities.
- D. Conduct annual reviews of marketing strategy and plans.
- E. Review and evaluate joint planning.
- F. Continue marketing and promotion of year-round activities and attractions.
- G. Improve total transportation experience and convenience for visitors by:
  - continuing reviews to increase capacity of international crossings,
  - continuing improvements in intercity transportation services,
  - participating in coordinated reviews to maintain transportation corridors to accommodate new technologies; and
  - establishing user convenience, experience and willingness-to-pay criteria

#### ***Queen Victoria Park***

- A. Strive for Queen Victoria Park to be a pedestrian domain.
- B. Continue joint programming of activities, events and festivals.

#### ***Queenston Heights Park***

- A. Implement programs in conjunction with Parks Canada for the interpretation, animation and re-enactment of the natural and historical significance of this site.
- B. Develop the Queenston Quarry Cement Mines and Kilns for interpretation and exploration.

#### ***Town of Fort Erie***

- A. Develop the historical and archaeological sites to increase visitor attraction.
- B. Continue land acquisition along the Riverfront, particularly lands immediately north of the International Railway Bridge, thereby creating a continuous park.



## A. We recommend that The Niagara Parks Commission:

- Receive this study;
- Adopt the 100-Year Vision,
- Adopt the 20-Year Plan,
- Adopt the Five-Year Action Plan, and
- Adopt the Planning and Implementation Program.

## B. We recommend that the Broad Concept of *Health, Fit and Cooperation* be adopted as the basis for all further activities.

## C. We recommend that the Commission:

- Adopt a pro-active role,
- Improve the visitor experience,
- Encourage discovery and education,
- Enhance the natural and Park landscapes,
- Enhance opportunities for tourism and economic development;
- Create benefits for the Municipalities, the Region, the Province and Canada; and
- Enhance international relations

## D. We recommend that The Niagara Parks Commission adopt the following supporting planning strategies:

- *dispersion*, to spread the increasing numbers of tourists more advantageously throughout the Primary Tourism Area and along the Parkway,
- *nodes*, to develop centres of activity and attraction along the Parkway;

- *linkages*, to create a network of activity and tourism connections between centres of visitor interest along the Parkway and in the Region, and
- *gateways*, to receive visitors, provide tourist information and become centres of attraction in their own right

## E. We recommend that The Niagara Parks Commission implement the following *General Considerations*:

- Establish working relationships with such institutions as the Art Gallery of Ontario, Ontario Hydro, the Ontario Science Centre, the Royal Ontario Museum and Science North for the creation of interpretation attractions,
- Develop cooperative scenarios and mechanisms for participation in selected joint venture projects with the Federal Government, Province of Ontario, the Regional Municipality of Niagara, City of Niagara Falls, Town of Fort Erie, Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake and the private sector; and
- Maintain the integrity of all sources of revenue to fund future development of Ontario's Niagara Parks

## F. We recommend that The Niagara Parks Commission implement the following *Interim Enhancements*:

- Improve the pedestrian environment between the Dufferin Islands and the Rainbow Bridge,
- Provide visitor information at People Mover stops and at major attractions,
- Promote the Niagara River Recreation Trail,
- Improve pedestrian linkages across the Treed Moraine,

- Improve signage,
- Increase the separation between vehicles and pedestrians in Queen Victoria Park,
- Undertake a renovation program for shops and restaurants,
- Raise the standard of design and materials used in high-exposure pedestrian areas, and
- Provide information about the natural and historic sites

## G. We recommend that The Niagara Parks Commission implement the following *Maintenance Priorities*:

- Develop a new landscaping maintenance program along the South Boulevard of The Niagara Parkway,
- Improve Park maintenance along the Town of Fort Erie Riverfront, and
- Improve maintenance of visitor facilities

## H. We recommend that The Niagara Parks Commission implement the following *Acquisition Priorities*:

- Secure or acquire the Murray Hill site for the Gateway to Ontario and Canada,
- Accept on appropriate terms the Ontario Power Generating Station when it becomes available,
- Accept on appropriate terms the Canadian Niagara Power Plant when it becomes available,
- Secure the long-term future of Navy Island,
- Acquire lands west of the Spanish Aero Car for development of a second Niagara Parks Commission parking lot and People Mover terminal,

- Consider acquisition of selected riverfront properties in the Town of Fort Erie as they become available,
- Acquire land to protect significant natural areas along the South Boulevard,
- Re-consider the validity of continuing land ownership outside of the Niagara Parkway corridor including Charles Daley Park and Battlefield House,
- Continue to work with Provincial agencies to achieve acquisition, preservation and conservation of important sites through means other than outright Niagara Parks Commission purchase;
- Examine acquisition opportunities on the Welland River; and
- Investigate acquisition of the Treed Moraine outside of the Park boundary

#### I. Given its new role, we recommend that The Niagara Parks Commission:

- Review its structure for receiving input from citizens and the private sector,
- Ensure that it has access to sufficient expertise to fully take advantage of the opportunities in all areas, including:
  - Archaeology,
  - Architecture,
  - Ecology;
  - Engineering,
  - History;
  - Landscape architecture,
  - Marketing,
  - Tourism planning;
  - Transportation planning, and
  - Other operations.

- Assess whether the Commission's staff complement is sufficient,
- Develop a liaison system and personnel for working with Provincial Ministries,
- Assess the need for staff positions with expertise in
  - Programming, animation and interpretation activities;
  - Interpretation of natural and human history,
  - Planning and decision-making processes,
  - Marketing expertise required for tiered advertising; and
  - Development of detailed planning

#### J. We recommend that The Niagara Parks Commission implement the following *Research Priorities*:

- Work with Parks Canada, the Ministry of Culture and Communication, the Royal Ontario Museum and other Provincial resources to initiate on-site research of locations relating to the natural resources, prehistory, archaeological resources, the War of 1812 and previous industrial use;
- Work with Parks Canada to carry out research on the two ships built at Fort George, the *Snow* *Mohawk* and the *Chantry*, for development of interpretation;
- Undertake a comprehensive historical and archaeological survey and site research along the North and South Boulevard to identify the historical resources that could become the basis for future attractions;
- Develop an archaeological master plan for Ontario's Niagara Parks,
- Develop a master plan of historical sites for Ontario's Niagara Parks,

- Invite outside experts to undertake a historical survey and site research at Fort Erie to identify the resources that could become the basis for developing new history-based attractions,
- Undertake research on an environmental management program for protecting and enhancing natural environments from Lake to Lake,
- Develop guidelines and implementation policies for opening natural environments to tourists, and
- Develop a wildlife management policy from Lake to Lake

#### K. We recommend that The Niagara Parks Commission undertake the following *Planning Activities*:

- Prepare comprehensive detailed development plans for all the Parks based on the 20-Year Plan,
- Participate in a coordinated planning review with the neighbouring Municipalities and Region to maintain unique landscape qualities of the lands adjacent to the Parkway,
- Work with the Municipalities to establish standards for design and environmental quality for development of lands next to the Parkway, for example River Road in Niagara Falls,
- Participate in the coordinated review of land uses adjacent to Niagara Parks Commission properties to achieve planning and policy compatibility with the long-range plan,
- Develop strategies and mechanisms to achieve integration of long-range planning and implementation by Provincial Ministries, Municipalities, the Region, Ontario Hydro, the private sector and others, as necessary,

- Plan the thematic development of each of the nodes, identify the potential opportunities and roles for The Niagara Parks Commission, the private sector and other agencies, maximize the direct and indirect economic benefits, and provide maximum diversity of attractions and services,
- Create a development plan and policy for the School of Horticulture and the Whirlpool Golf Course,
- Conduct annual reviews of the Five-Year Action Plan and the 20-Year Plan;
- Re-establish goals and objectives and re-assess long-term plans every five years;
- Re-establish implementation priorities every five years, and
- Develop a transportation system that allows the Parks to achieve their full potential and integration with adjacent land uses and transportation systems.

**L. We recommend that The Niagara Parks Commission implement the following *Programming and Interpretation Activities*:**

- Develop natural history, archaeological and historical interpretation programs at Old Fort Erie, Frenchman's Creek, Navy Island, Queenston Heights Park, the Great Gorge Adventure, Whirlpool Rapids, the Whirlpool, Niagara Glen, McFarland Point Park, Mackenzie House, Brown's Point, Fort George and along the Niagara River Recreation Trail.
- Extend winter activities to give the Whirlpool Golf Course intensive year-round use,

- Develop interpretative horticultural walks and tours for visitors to the School of Horticulture,
- Increase programming for performances at the bandshells at Queen Victoria Park, Queenston Heights, Old Fort Erie and the Oakes Garden Theatre;
- Develop interpretation programs for the Gorge Interpretative Walk extending from the foot of the Falls to the Queenston Dock,
- Work with Parks Canada to develop an interpretative program to animate and depict the history of Fort George,
- Develop evening and nighttime activity programs for visitors throughout Queen Victoria Park based on entertainment and light displays,
- Develop a comprehensive outdoor education and field trip program for Ontario schoolchildren,
- Develop programs for additional market segments, particularly visitors from the Pacific Rim,
- Provide a broad range of opportunities for entertainment, recreation, adventure, exploration, education and culture,
- Develop themes of human and natural history, horticulture, geology, ecology, nature study, recreation and industrial and technological development,
- Develop a range of informal people activities to enhance use, animating the Park System during peak visitor periods;
- Develop themes, programs and events for shoulder season and winter tourism,
- Provide visitors with a unique Canadian experience relating to Canadian history and achievements, giving them a sense of Ontario and its people, and
- Develop a program of winter activities and celebrations.

**M. We recommend that The Niagara Parks Commission implement the following *Architectural Principles*:**

- All new structures should be developed to fit into the landform, and
- Existing buildings should receive maintenance and upgrading to contemporary tourism standards, while protecting their heritage attributes

**N. We recommend that The Niagara Parks Commission undertake the following *Landscape Architectural Activities*:**

- Develop a landscape assessment and management program to maintain the trees in Queen Victoria Park, including those on the Treed Moraine,
- Develop a master landscape planting plan for Queen Victoria Park,
- Develop a tree management program along the North Boulevard to maintain its unique landscape quality,
- Develop a comprehensive landscape plan for the South Boulevard based on working with the unique growing conditions for new tree plantings, minimizing mowed grass and allowing the indigenous character to flourish in extensive regeneration areas,
- Protect the ecological integrity of Ussher's, Boyer's, Black's, Baker's, Miller's and Frenchman's Creeks,
- Undertake comprehensive site analysis, inventory and environmental assessment of the Rapids, Whirlpool and Niagara Glen prior to all planning and development;

- For all lands affected by implementation projects of any kind, undertake comprehensive site analysis, inventory and environmental assessment to determine ecological and historical impacts;
- Create a landscape theme and development plan to upgrade Mather Park as a place of people activity and history;
- Develop a master landscape plan for the Whirlpool Golf Course and the School of Horticulture; and
- Develop a master landscape plan for the Town of Fort Erie Riverfront.

**O. We recommend that The Niagara Parks Commission implement the following *Marketing Priorities*:**

- Undertake immediate expansion and upgrading of existing revenue-generating attractions and facilities;
- Develop a five-year financial plan to include costs and revenues of new ventures and increasing revenues from existing sources and facilities;
- Consider public-sector and private-sector financial participation;
- Develop detailed marketing strategies, plans and budgets for:
  - general marketing and advertising;
  - attracting specific market segments;
  - marketing specific attractions; and
  - cooperative marketing efforts.

- Participate in a cooperative, coordinated marketing strategy for The Niagara Parks Commission, City, Municipalities, Regional, Provincial and Federal Governments, including participation by the private sector;
- Market passbook package tours of Niagara Falls and Niagara Parks Commission attractions;
- Promote new attractions and experiences to all segments of the tourism market;
- Increase marketing of the Whirlpool Golf Course, restaurants and sports-related facilities to capture the upscale, recreation-oriented segment of the tourism market;
- Market and promote year-round activities and attractions;
- Conduct annual progress reviews of marketing strategies and plans;
- Review, evaluate and update strategies every five years;
- Participate in visitor satisfaction, market and tourism surveys at five-year intervals;
- Develop marketing which builds on existing strengths to hold existing segments;
- Develop marketing for international visitor segments;
- Develop package tours for the shoulder seasons and new market groups; and
- Develop a long-range financial plan for the Commission for the Five-Year Action Plan and 20-Year Plan, outlining:
  - current sources of revenue and volume of sales activity;

- economic development strategy of The Niagara Parks Commission;
- the potential of the 20-Year Plan;
- linkages with economic and tourism development strategies for the Federal Government, Province, Region and Municipalities; and
- strategic significance of economic development and economic impact

**P. We recommend that The Niagara Parks Commission act on the following to improve *Visitor Transportation*:**

- Continue a coordinated review of transportation issues by the Commission with adjoining Municipalities, Region, Ministry of Transportation, Bridge Commission, Canada Immigration, tour bus operators and others, as required;
- Continue participation in joint reviews of transit, People Mover and parking policies and strategies in Niagara, including:
  - extending the People Mover system;
  - establishing a City visitor movement system with interconnections to The Niagara Parks Commission system;
  - encourage the development of a linear transit system or Con Rail right-of-way; and
  - participate in developing a tourist parking plan
- Extend the People Mover to the Great Gorge Adventure, the Spanish Aero Car, Thompson Point, Wintergreen Flats, Queenston Heights and Queenston Wharf;

- Strive to increase accessibility to Niagara from principal market areas by:
  - encouraging implementation of a high-speed boat link from Toronto to Queenston;
  - increasing capacity of Canadian Immigration at Rainbow, Peace and Whirlpool Bridges;
  - encouraging improved intercity bus service between Canada and the United States; and
  - encouraging high-speed rail linkages to Niagara Falls.
- Improve access to Fort Erie and the Parkway by:
  - coordinated review of Queen Elizabeth Way, Regional and Municipal roads; and
  - changing configuration of the Parkway to simplify roads around Mather Arch.
- Continue development of a signage system with other agencies along the Niagara Parkway to inform visitors about points of interest;
- Reduce conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles in Queen Victoria Park;
- Reduce the impact of parked tour buses; and
- Create an additional parking node and People Mover stop at the Whirlpool.

**Q. We recommend that The Niagara Parks Commission implement the following for the *Phased Development of New Attractions* along the entire Parks System:**

- Develop the Gateway to Ontario and Canada with local, Regional and Provincial tourist information, visitor reception and an overview museum of the natural and human history,

- Develop the Ontario Power Generating Station as a year-round Falls and Gorge Interpretative Walk, include interpretation exhibits and tourist services,
- Redevelop Table Rock visitor facilities and landscaping,
- Develop the Pedestrian Promenades along the Gorge and Rapids, connecting the attractions;
- Develop visitor facilities in the Toronto Generating Plant;
- Expand the Greenhouse to create a Greenhouse-Galleria as a link between the Toronto Generating Plant and the Canadian Niagara Power Plant with indoor/outdoor gardens and activity places;
- Develop the Canadian Niagara Power Plant facility as a Forum for year-round entertainment and activity with an outdoor area suitable for performances and large gatherings;
- Develop pedestrian linkages to private tourism areas from the Greenhouse-Galleria, the Canadian Niagara Power Plant, *Maid of the Mist* Incline Railway, Murray Hill Site and Skylon;
- Develop the Gorge Interpretative Walk from the foot of the Falls to the Queenston Dock;
- Develop the historical, archaeological and natural history sites to increase attraction in the Gorge and along the River at sites of significance;
- Re-develop the Great Gorge Adventure facilities,
- Develop an outdoor interpretation centre at Wintergreen Flats;

- Develop a comprehensive master plan for the School of Horticulture;
- Create a children's playground at Queenston Heights Park and further develop the outdoor recreation area;
- Develop the Niagara Parks Gateway North;
- Develop a major recreational node at the Miller's Creek Campground and Manna,
- Upgrade the Fort Erie Riverfront Park to make it more accessible and to become a corridor of active public use;
- Develop the Niagara Parks Gateway South; and
- Develop the Old Fort Erie sites.

**R. We recommend that The Niagara Parks Commission undertake the following studies to further refine the 20-Year Plan:**

- identification of local, Regional and Provincial economic benefits,
- statement on strategic significance to local, Regional, Provincial and Canadian economies,
- analysis of revenue and sales activity;
- revenue forecasts for the 20-Year Plan,
- a long-range financial plan; and
- a forecast of capital costs



Preparing a long-range vision of this magnitude required the knowledge, dedication and efforts of many people. We wish to thank all those who participated. In particular, it gives us great pleasure to formally express our gratitude to the following for their cooperation and contributions.

### **The Niagara Parks Commission Commissioners**

Pamela V. Walker, *Chairman*

Archie Katzman, *Vice-Chairman*

Robert B. Edgar, *Q.C.*

Margaret George

John Holer

Mayor Heinz K. Hummel, *Town of Fort Erie*

Douglas A. Mann, *Regional Municipality of Niagara*

Mayor Jim Marino, *Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake*

Carolyn M. Reid

Mayor William Smeaton, *City of Niagara Falls*

Philip J. Sottile

William C. West, *Q.C.*

Marvin D. Kriluck, *Commission Solicitor*

### **Steering Committee**

Pamela Verrill Walker, *Committee Chairman, The Niagara Parks Commission*

Archie Katzman, *Commissioner, The Niagara Parks Commission*

William C. West, *Q.C., Commissioner, The Niagara Parks Commission*

Dr. David Drinkwalter, *Director of Western Region, Ontario Hydro*

James W. Keenan, *Deputy Minister, Ministry of Tourism and Recreation*

A. Sally Young (alternate), *Executive Director, Ministry of Tourism and Recreation*

Dennis W. Schafer, *General Manager, The Niagara Parks Commission*

James Harris, *Study Liaison, Director of Planning and Development, The Niagara Parks Commission*

Jane Lowrey, *Secretary, The Niagara Parks Commission*

### **Advisory Group**

Dennis W. Schafer, *Group Chairman, General Manager, The Niagara Parks Commission*

James Bradley, *Program Analyst, Finance and Administration Branch, Ministry of Tourism and Recreation*

Corwin Cambray, *Manager, Policy Planning, Planning and Development Department, Regional Municipality of Niagara*

Jack Collinson, *Chief Administrative Officer, City of Niagara Falls*

Ed Ellard, *Area Manager, Ministry of Transportation*

Andrew Houser, *Director of Operations, Southern Ontario, Ministry of Natural Resources*

John Kerr, *Manager, Resource Management and Analysis, Planning and Administration Division, Ministry of Tourism and Recreation*

Frank LaFleche, *Manager, Niagara Falls Canada Visitor and Convention Bureau*

Emile McIlvenna, *Director of Parks and Recreation, Town of Fort Erie*

Marilyn Miller, *Conservation Officer, Ministry of Culture and Communications*

J. Charles Sands, *District Manager, Ontario Hydro*

George Voth, *Administrator, Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake*

L. E. Burns, *Staff, The Niagara Parks Commission*

George Bailey, *Staff, The Niagara Parks Commission*

John Morley, *Staff, The Niagara Parks Commission*

James Harris, *Staff, The Niagara Parks Commission*

Jane Lowrey, *Secretary, The Niagara Parks Commission*

We thank the following individuals for the valuable information they provided through personal interviews or written briefs:

**Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs, Plans Administration Branch, Central and Southwest**

John Livey, *Manager*

Ray Parfitt, *Planner*

Zdravko Weing, *Senior Planner*

**Ontario Ministry of Culture and Communications**

Peter Carruthers, *Environmental Assessment Coordinator*

Kathy Dandy, *Data Coordinator*

Bill Fox, *Senior Archaeologist*

Marilyn Miller, *Conservation Officer*

**Ontario Ministry of Tourism and Recreation**

Tom Adamchick, *Operations Division*

Brian Antonsen, *Tourism Coordinator, St. Catharines Office*

Stephen Barsodi, *Tourism Development Branch*

David Coulter, *Officer of Expenditure Policy, Expenditure and Divisional Services Branch, Management Board of Cabinet*

Rob Heming, *Recreation Branch*

John Kerr, *Manager, Resource Planning and Analysis*

Claude Landry, *Communications Branch*

Doug Luker, *Resource Planning and Analysis*

Ellen Mary Mills, *Finance Administration*

Ed Ogden, *Tourism Division*

Mara Pezzuto, *Advertising and Promotion Section*

Sally Young, *Planning and Administration*

**Parks Canada**

Walter Haldorson, *Superintendent, Niagara National Historic Parks*

Brian Ross, *Project Archaeologist, Native Sites, Niagara National Historic Parks*

**Ontario Hydro**

Dr. David Drinkwalter, *Director of Western Region*

Peter Maitland, *Manager, Corporate Relations*

J. Charles Sands, *District Manager*

Kenneth M. Sullivan, *Property Officer, Western Region*

**Niagara Frontier Region of the New York State Office of Parks, Reservation and Historic Preservation**

Mario Pirastru, *Regional Director*

Barry Virgilio, *Conservation Educator, Schoellkopf Geological Museum*

**Regional Municipality of Niagara**

Corwin Cambray, *Manager, Policy Planning, Planning and Development Department*

Conrad Eidt, *Director of Engineering*

Clive Foster, *Traffic Co-ordinator*

George Nicholson, *Senior Planner*

**City of Niagara Falls**

William Smeaton, *Mayor*

Jack Collinson, *Chief Administrative Officer*

Doug Darbyson, *Director of Planning*

Andy Lamb, *Municipal Engineer*

**Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake**

Jim Marino, *Mayor*

George Voth, *Administrator*

**Town of Fort Erie**

Heinz Hummel, *Mayor*

Emile McIlvenna, *Director of Parks and Recreation*

**Private Tourism Operations**

Sam Alfieri, *Capri Restaurant*

Len Cade, *Cairn Croft Inn*

John Holer, *Marineland*

Dave Hyde, *Niagara Falls Tours*

Dave Jovanovic, *Lincoln Motor Inn*

Sam LaRosa, *Dominion Paving*

Gerry MacIntosh, *Your Host Hotel*

Jack McLaren, *Jack McLaren Tours*

Harry Oakes, *Hoco Ltd.*

Gordon Paul, *The Honeymoon Hotel*

Fred Taylor, *Your Host Hotel*

George Yerich and family, *Skylon*

### **The Niagara Parks Commission Staff**

Jim Ashby, *Director of Food Services*

George Bailey, *Director of Public Relations*

Robert Brooker, *Director of Finance*

Bud Burns, *Director of Attractions*

Dave Gillis, *Properties Manager*

Margaret Lamontagne, *Secretary of Planning and Development*

Bob McIlveen, *Assistant to the General Manager*

John Morley, *Director of Horticulture*

Nick Murphy, *Superintendent of Engineering*

Debbie Whitehouse, *Director of Human Resources*

Roy Woodrow, *Director of Retail Operations*

### **Niagara Parks Commission School of Horticulture**

William Snowden, *Superintendent*

Tom Laviolette, *Instructor*

### **Individuals**

R. Barnslev, *St. Catharines Resident*

Dr. Donald Chew, *Physician practicing in Niagara Falls*

M. S. Cushing, *Former Assistant General Manager, The Niagara Parks Commission*

Harry L. French, *Vice President, Planning Division, Marshall Macklin Monaghan*

Glen Gandy, *General Manager, Chamber of Commerce, Niagara Falls, Ontario*

Isabella Guthrie-McNaughton, *Librarian, Royal Ontario Museum*

Sultan Haniff, *Metropolitan Toronto Reference Library*

Fred and Helen Hardwicke, *Niagara Falls Residents*

James Ian Harris, *Graduate Architect (deceased)*

Sharon Hick, *Librarian, Royal Ontario Museum*

Robert Hill, *Miller's Creek Resident*

Susan Matthews, *The Economic Planning Group of Canada*

Joe McMahon, *Manager, Niagara Transit*

Bill and Hester Newby, *Niagara Falls Residents*

Charles H. Ort, *Chairman, City of Niagara Falls Board of Museums*

Gordon Paul, *President, Niagara Falls Canada Visitor and Convention Bureau*

S. Gordon Phillips, *Principal, The Economic Planning Group of Canada*

Raymond Roberts, *Niagara Falls Resident*

George A. Seibel, *Chairman, Niagara Falls Heritage Foundation, City of Niagara Falls Historian, The Niagara Parks Commission Historian*

Dorothy Van Slyke, *Chief Librarian, City of Niagara Falls*

Ronald F. Williamson, Ph.D., *Senior Archaeologist, Archeological Services Inc.*

Donald R. Wilson, *Former General Manager, The Niagara Parks Commission*

## SPECIAL THANKS

The Study Team owes an enormous debt to George A. Seibel. His inspiring writings helped us understand the people and the land of Niagara.

**Moriyama & Teshima Planners Limited**

Raymond Moriyama, *Principal-in-Charge*

George Stockton, *Project Coordinator*

Ted Teshima

Aubrey McIntosh

Daniel Teramura

Kevin Miyauchi

Mary Sabat

Pat Vieira

*Marketing Consultant*

**The Coopers & Lybrand Consulting Group**

John Farrow

J. David Dumoulin

*Transportation Consultant*

**DS-Lea Associates Ltd.**

John Long

Horst Leingreuer

*Book Design*

**The Spencer Francey Group Inc.**

*Illustrations*

**Gordon Grice**

*Editorial Consultant*

**Robert J. Sawyer**

*Typesetting*

**Moveable Type Inc.**

*Colour Separations*

**SQS Inc.**

*Printing*

**Somerset Graphics Co. Ltd.**

## PHOTOGRAPHY CREDITS

The Niagara Parks Commission Archives, cover photo, photos pp. 2, 18, 24, 29-31, 37, 39-44, 46, 48, 50, 115, 118, 140.

DS-Lea Associates Ltd., photos pp. 54, 68.

George Stockton, photo p. 24, aerial photos pp. 34-36, 38, 40-43, 45, 47-49, 56, 62, 63, 130.

Kevin Miyauchi, photo p. 31.













3 1761 11547867 9

